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"
AN INQUIRY INTO THE CAUSES OF
AGGRESSION IN THE MEXICAN CULTURE

A Dissertation
Presented to
The School of Theology

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for
Doctor of Religion

by
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"
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This dissertation, written by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. For many years, I have looked for a reason which would explain, even if only in part, a paradox in the culture in which I was born and nurtured. That is, how is it that "machismo" and romanticism coexist and why are woman loathed and lauded side by side?

Among the many scenes which I remember from my childhood and early youth, some have been indelibly engraved in my mind because of their apparent (to my middle class bias, real) wrongness and awkwardness. I remember scenes like these: a man riding his burro while his firewood and child laden pregnant wife follows on foot at a distance of ten to fifteen feet, a man literally dragging his wife through the busy village *Tianguis* (market), two men killing each other because one of them failed to dim his lights, a badly bruised woman who dared to ask her husband where he spent the night.

What ever happened to make scenes like these part of the otherwise placid and romantic life of Mexico? Why do

these happy-go-lucky and polite men turn into ruthless assassins practically at the drop of a hat? How is it possible that in a country where motherhood is venerated and the Virgin of Guadalupe is worshiped, women, as women, cannot receive respect commensurate with that shown to the mother or the goddess? Why should women have to wait until their hairs are gray? Why should they only find fulfillment through their male children, many of whom are psychologically maimed because of smothering or rejection? This work presents the result of the quest for answers to these questions.

Importance of the study. The importance of this problem became more apparent as I continued to search for the causes of the paradoxical behavior of my fellow countrymen. Sociological, psychological, educational, and economic repercussions sprang forth throughout the investigation; and what was just as important, at least for my particular point of view, religious causes and repercussions also came up.

There is no doubt in my mind that this is one of the most subtle, yet important, problem in the total life of Mexico, a country "on the way to development," to use a benign expression.

II. THE SCOPE OF THE INVESTIGATION

When I first started to investigate the phenomenon of the over-aggressiveness of the Mexican, I had only considered cultural influences on the total psychodynamics of my people. While it is true that I have found that the "mother-complex" seems to be at the root of the spirit of violence, which prevails in Mexico, I had failed to consider the fact that there are other influences which produce aggressiveness, not only in the Mexican, but in each and every human being. At the risk of being too ambitious, I have decided to explore several of the possible causes for aggression among my countrymen.

The central thrust in the present work will be to try to show that in the Mexican culture a long attested "inferiority complex" in the Mexican seems to be correlated very strongly with the "Mother Archetype." Two main problems stem from this fact; on one hand, the need of the Mexican to assert his manliness, his masculinity before others, a need which seems to be one of the etiological factors of an abnormally great incidence of homicides, and a correspondent or derivative low status of women.

The thesis here advanced is that the complex and anxiety in the male with the consequent hyper-aggression

and the low status given to women stem from historically unresolved conflicts in man-woman relationships. To sort of "make up" to women for the mistreatment in real life, the muses and goddesses became ever more the objects of worship and adoration. An elevation of women in the abstract has allowed for the concrete woman of flesh and bones to continue to be treated as an inferior.

Because this is a dissertation to partially fulfill the requirements of the Doctorate in Religion, a major emphasis will be placed on the role which religion has had in the total complex and the way in which religion can suggest possible solutions to the problem.

In the initial chapter, I shall attempt to present evidence of the biological reasons for aggressiveness. As the work progresses, I shall present what may be called "existential" reasons for aggressiveness, and finally, I shall present the psycho-cultural influences on the aggressiveness of the Mexican.

In order to try to show that the situation is, in fact, what I have proposed it to be, I shall be dwelling first on a psychological hypothesis about the relations between complexes, symbols, and archetypes. I am referring to the psychology of Carl Gustav Jung, who laid the ground work for a comprehensive understanding of the unconscious, which takes into account the "Mother Archetype," and to

Jung's disciple, Erich Neumann whose book *The Great Mother* explored the aforementioned archetype almost exhaustively.

Secondly, I shall present a survey of the way in which the Mother Archetype has found expression in the history, mythology, religion, and psychodynamics of the Mexican. This will lead me to discuss the present situation which I shall do by presenting a cultural and characteriological profile of the Mexican.

As the paper progresses, I shall look at the way in which the Mexican Revolution of 1910, the "Unfinished Revolution" as it has been called by many, has helped the lot of women. I shall present an evaluation of what Protestantism in Mexico has done in respect to this problem; and I shall mention the Roman Catholic progress, at least at the level of the hierarchy, in dealing with the problems of Mariology during the sessions of the Second Vatican Council. In the final pages, I offer some possible guides for improvement of the situation concentrating on ways in which religion can lend a much needed helping hand.

I do not presume to be completely original; many have written about aggression and about the character of the Mexican. I feel, however, that this is the first time that all of these studies are brought into focus from a religious perspective.

The method employed here is that of testing or sup-

porting the basic thesis by presenting data coming from written documents from different disciplines as well as from personal observations made during my upbringing in, and frequent subsequent visits to, Mexico.

A Spanish saying states that when a person copies another writer, he is a plagiarist; if he copies from two sources, he is a dirty crook; but, if he copies from many sources, he ends up being an investigator involved in research. I believe I am in the last category and hope to prove that such is the case.

CHAPTER II

CAUSES OF AGGRESSION: A SURVEY

In this chapter some of the current theories of aggression will be explored briefly. All these theories may be considered "universal" in that they affect all mankind and therefore contribute to the total etiology of aggression in the Mexican. Aggression can be studied from a purely biological perspective, as Desmond Morris and Konrad Lorenz do. Their contributions are here summarized. From the point of view of psychology, special attention is given to Erik Erikson's contributions, but other theories are also discussed. Finally "existential" causes of aggression are presented. Existentialist thought has opened some interesting questions which one ought to consider when investigating human behavior.

I. BIOLOGICAL ROOTS OF VIOLENCE

The idealism of the Nineteenth Century Humanist and the spiritualization of man of the religious anthropocentrists were violently shocked and irretrievably shattered by one single work, *The Origin of the Species*, by Charles

Darwin. Not since Copernicus had man's ego suffered such a tremendous blow; now not only his house, the earth, gravitated around the sun, but his ancestry went back to the primates and was linked, qualitatively, with all of the members up and down the phylogenetic scale.

The rescue attempts began almost immediately; a "biology of the spirit" was needed to counteract these scientific influences. The louder the voices, the more futile the attempts to discredit Darwin and evolution seemed.

In the early part of our century, Henry Bergson's vitalism was the best and most respectable way of dealing with evolution. In his *Creative Evolution*, Bergson invested evolution with a spirituality through his "elan vital." The Jesuit, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, carried Bergson's ideas on and christianized evolution, seeing it as moving towards the Omega Point, in his *Phenomenon of Man*.

Today, philosophers and theologians do not get worked up about evolution, nor are they baptizing it. We have accepted evolution and our animality. Paul Tillich, in his *Systematic Theology* acknowledges very clearly the biological heritage of man. In Volume II we read the following:

. . . Christianity must reject the idealistic separation of an innocent nature from guilty man. Such a rejection has become comparatively easy in our period because of the insights gained about the growth of man and his relation to nature within and outside himself. . . . it can be shown that in the development of man there is no absolute discontinuity between animal bondage and human freedom. There are leaps between differ-

ent stages, but there is also a slow and continuous transformation. It is impossible to say at which point in the process of natural evolution animal nature is replaced by the nature which, in our present experience, we know as human, a nature which is qualitatively different from animal nature. The possibility that both natures were in conflict with each other in the same being cannot be denied.¹

Still more recently, John Cobb, relying very strongly on the philosophical thought of Alfred North Whitehead, has stated that:

The idea that men can be distinguished from other animals by their possession of souls gains no support from him [Whitehead]. Wherever there is evidence of some centralized dominance in the animal organism, he assumes that a dominant occasion is present; and to whatever *degree* [italics not in original] such dominant occasions have significant serial order, they jointly constitute a soul.

.

It is my assumption that along these lines one can argue with Whitehead's tacit support that soul is more fully developed in men in general than in animals in general. . . . whatever we say of the difference between men and other animals must be affirmed in terms of gradations and with empirical warrant.²

So, the thought of Whitehead, through Cobb, is helpful in presenting the argument of a continuous line of development from man to animal with differences basically of gradation, that is quantitative, even if, for practical purposes qualitative.

¹Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), II, 41-42.

²John B. Cobb, Jr., *A Christian Natural Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1965), 56-58.

Cobb, again, in *The Structure of Christian Existence*, supports the idea of a continuous development with thresholds which mark the appearance of greater and greater awareness.

The purpose of this chapter is to describe what distinguishes the structure of human existence in general from the structure of subhuman animal existence in general. Since the human developed out of the subhuman, and since this process of development was a continuous one, it is essential to understand what man has in common with other animals, as well as to describe the threshold that marked his³ appearance as something genuinely and decisively new.

If one recognizes as factual man's relationship to his animal ancestors, then it follows that a biological, or more specifically, a zoological investigation into the causes of aggression is thoroughly acceptable.

Two works have been of tremendous help in elucidating this problem, Desmond Morris' *The Naked Ape* and Konrad Lorenz's *On Aggression*. They both argue in favor of an "instinctive" bent to aggression, an animalistic urge to attack, for several reasons, those of man's own kind. Morris and Lorenz are perfectly aware that their works are not exhaustive and that the causes of violence are complex; however, their analysis of "biological" causes is very effective in so far as they are only a biological investigation into the nature of violence and aggression.

³John B. Cobb, Jr., *The Structure of Christian Existence* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), 35.

According to Morris, fighting among naked apes is paralleled among their ancestors in many ways. Fighting is necessary to claim a territory, to take a mate, and in general to survive. Man's territoriality is a part of the carnivore heritage our ancestors handed down to us.

Having been at one time basically frugivorous and tree dwellers, environmental circumstances, such as the change in foliage due to drastic climatic changes, forced the ancestors of homo sapiens to look for another modus vivendi. Some scientists argue that an aquatic intermediate stage brought about the nakedness of man's skin, but Morris blames parasites such as fleas and lice for the gradual and eventual loss of hair by the naked ape. Whichever the true reason, the fact remains that the coat was shed and only vestigial hair covers most of man's "naked" body.

After having lived in the trees in a more or less placid environment, man's ancestors were forced to hunt for their food. Evolution, through neotenuous changes, aided the process, his limbs got longer, his thumbs were able to oppose, his childhood or dependent periods became longer, and his brain larger.

The shift to a carnivore existence forced upon man's ancestors a ferocity that they had not had in their tree existence. "Up there," fights might have been caused mainly by mating rivalries, but on the ground, violence

became a necessity for survival. Hunting territories had to be protected, rival species had to be dealt with, prey had to be hunted down, and now the "babies" with ever longer dependency periods had to be protected along with their mothers. Sexual awareness was also increased and jealousies were now even more prevalent than before.

Through comparative studies, Morris and others have been able to ascertain a "signaling system" through which the members of one species "communicate" submission or superiority. Members of most species in their natural habitat will fight their own kind, for whatever reason, only to subdue the enemy. When one of the fighters recognizes that he has lost, he signals facially or through his body posture the acknowledgement of defeat. After this the opposing member will not continue to fight and will not be threatened anymore by the presence of the subdued enemy.

In the case of the naked ape, his brain allowed him to become innovative. He created weapons to kill at first the prey he needed, but later, he was able to turn his weapon toward his own kind.

The first killings might have been accidental as the stronger and now armed foe struck too hard not giving a chance to the other party for any signaling. Later on, as ingenuity proliferated more and more weapons and put more and more distance between enemies, the natural "signaling"

became totally ineffective. White flags and peace treaties, poor substitutes for the natural signals, were not introduced until rather recently. And so the primordial Cains continued their rampage.

Konrad Lorenz's conclusions agree with much of what Morris says. His work, originally in German (*Das Sogenannte Böse*), was first published in 1963, and so preceded Morris' *Naked Ape*, but these men seem to have worked independently of each other.

Lorenz devotes his whole book to study aggression through comparative studies of aggression among other species, such as coral reef fish, various fowl, and also rats. His study is therefore more extensive than is that of Morris, who dwells mainly on his experience with primates.

At the risk of oversimplifying Lorenz's work, it can be said that his foremost contribution to the particular concern of this paper is his conclusion that, by and large, the degree of aggressiveness among the species is directly proportional to two very important factors, territory and "love."

An animal is increasingly aggressive the closer he is to his own territory; whole books have been written about this and the "territorial imperative" should not be ignored. However, for the purposes of this paper, it is the second feature that is most enlightening.

Lorenz was able to find that intra-species ferocity is greater where there is a stronger bond among mates. In the cases of flocks or herds, where mating may occur among many of the members, aggression may be related more specifically to leadership, but by and large, flock and herd animals are traditionally more "passive." (The outstanding exception of *toros de lidia*, bullfighting bulls, and fighting cocks should be considered as "trained" or man created subspecies.)

In the case of bonded animals, such as coral fish and the greylag goose, the ferocity which they display is unique, just as their choosing a lifetime mate is unique in the zoological spectrum. The importance of this finding will become clearer as this paper progresses. At this time, it suffices to advance the following premise, the "bond" of which Lorenz talks about is intimately linked to the bond of love which exists among human beings; furthermore, the role of sexuality in aggression is underscored ever more by Lorenz's findings.

Before one leaves the "biological" causes of aggression, it is important to mention that many studies are currently being conducted to try to find the correlation which might exist between aggression and glandular imbalances. These studies, at this point, are at the experimental level only and are therefore too inconclusive.

Along these lines, experiments have been conducted to determine the role that sex, and sex hormones, play in aggression. Tests were given to human beings in 1956 by Levin and Sears, and, by and large, males display aggression sooner and more overtly than females.⁴ This, however, should not be taken as wholly determinative since culture may influence females not to act "unfeminine" by displaying aggression.

Among animals, experiments conducted with rats have shown that castrated rats are less aggressive, whereas rats injected with male hormones are hyper-aggressive.⁵ However, it has also been shown that other instigations or learning experiences can override the effects of the androgen. Bevan, Daves, and Levy, in 1960, trained mice to be either aggressive or passive by rewarding aggressiveness in one group and passiveness in another group. The data they collected showed that even after castration, the group taught to fight, kept on fighting and that even after testosterone shots, the non-fighters remained non-fighters.⁶

Still another genetic factor explored is that of the excessive production of norepinephrine in the body.

⁴ Leonard Berkowitz, *Aggression* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1962), 266-267.

⁵*Ibid.*, 16-17.

⁶*Ibid.*, 18.

According to some authorities, there may be not only a relational, but even causal role played by norepinephrine in outward aggression. It has been reported that typically aggressive animals, such as lions, have a high content of norepinephrine in their adrenal medullae.

Evidence for this thesis is still equivocal and there is still a long way to go before it can be shown that there is indeed a causal and not merely a relational role.

Finally, the other area which has been presently opened for exploration is that of chromosomal composition. Many "criminal" types have been found to have an extra chromosome "X"; so some people are concluding that this produces over-aggressiveness in those individuals. This area, again, is too new to provide any conclusive evidence, but must be watched as one of the avenues through which aggression may be better understood in the future.

II. PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF AGGRESSION

To look only for the physiological and geneological, or biological, roots of violence without paying attention to man's psychological make-up is to be missing a significant part of the complexity of what man is. The roots of man's violence may no doubt be in the instincts which he shares with all his philogenetic relatives, but much of what trig-

gers the mechanisms of aggression in man is caused by other elements which as far as scientists have been able to determine are not dominant in animal aggression even if they are present as etiological components of such aggression.

Erik Erikson explained in an article this basic difference in the following manner:

Man is natively endowed only with a patchwork of instinctual drives, which, to be sure, owe much of their form and their energy to the inherited fragments of instinctual animality but in the human are never and cannot ever be in themselves adaptive or consummative (or in brief "natural") but are always governed by the complexities of individuation and of cultural form, even though in our time we have come to visualize rational and cultural modes as natural.⁷

There are innumerable psychological theories about the factors affecting aggression. Practically everyone is already too familiar with Freud's Eros-Thanatos psychodynamics. Thanatos, the death impulse, may many times be directed against others rather than against the self. Aggression may be seen as a suicidal tendency, that is, attacking others to provoke an aggressive response on the part of the attacked, who in turn would strike back and thereby complete the "suicidal" cycle. On the other hand, aggression may also be caused by Eros, the life impulse, by making the subject attack in order to preserve life.

⁷Erik Erikson, "Psychoanalysis and On-going History," *American Journal of Psychiatry*, CXXII:3 (September 1965), 245.

In his earlier works, Freud had acknowledged frustration as an important component in the etiology of aggression. Aggression, Freud said, was the primordial reaction to frustrations occurring "whenever pleasure seeking or pain avoiding behavior was blocked."⁸ It is this side of Freud which is now much more accepted in psychiatric circles than his harder to attest, yet equally important, Eros-Thanatos impulses as part of the psychodynamics of aggression.

Following in Freud's footsteps, his disciple, Carl G. Jung, carried many of Freud's principles to their logical conclusions, and dug deeper into man's unconscious. Jung presented a rather imaginative system of complexes, symbols, and archetypes originating in man's collective unconscious which affected all human behavior.

Although a discussion of Jung's contributions to the study of the causes of aggression rightfully belongs here, it has been postponed in order to present a fuller discussion in the context of the specific way in which the "mother archetype" affects aggression. This mother archetype is closely related to the mother complex which operates so strongly in the psychodynamics of the Mexican people and culture.

In 1939 a monograph by Dollard *et al.*, entitled

⁸J. Dollard *et al.*, *Frustration and Aggression* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939), 21.

Frustration and Aggression, appeared. This is now a "classic" study of aggression and much of what has been written since can really be considered as footnotes to this work. Most authorities today subscribe to one modified version or another of Dollard's hypothesis that aggression originates ultimately in response to some frustration. Frustration refers to an interference with on-going goal directed activities and aggression is defined in most psychology circles as "sequence of behavior, the goal response of which is the injury of the person toward whom it is directed."⁹ (In this inquiry, these definitions are accepted, but "symbolic" or sublimized aggression i.e., aggressiveness in business, in painting, etc., is also included.)

Some of the important modifications or complements to this theory must be mentioned because of their importance both in themselves and for this work. Berkowitz, in 1960, introduced the intermediate emotional stage of *anger* which heightens the probability of aggression. The intensity of anger is related to the degree of thwarting or frustration. These factors, of course, will vary from person to person and from group to group, so that the frustration--anger--aggression thresholds will by necessity be extremely variable.

⁹*Ibid.*, 9.

White and Lippit shed very important light on this theory when they hypothesized that thwartings elicit hostility only when they lower the person's self-esteem. Aggression, they concluded, is almost always oriented toward restoring self-esteem.

Other variables causing aggressive behavior include the degree of visibility of the frustration causing object or of the chosen scapegoat. Aggression may not always be directed toward the frustration causing agent but can either be sublimated, inwardly directed, or redirected towards another esteem restoring object (scapegoat). The scapegoat need not be a "weaker" subject than the original thwarting agent. It was found that many times any other person would do. White and Lippit, again, found that many children would redirect their aggression, originally meant for teachers or authority figures, against some of the bigger children.

Still another variable is the degree of acceptance in one's own reference group of aggression. This is of importance since in the Mexican culture, machismo--manly behavior which includes overt aggression--is highly valued in many reference groups. This is true also of most of the world's poorer low social-economic groups.

Closely linked to this reference group variable is the degree of cohesiveness of such groups. The more cohesive the group, the more its influence will be felt by the

individuals in it.¹⁰ Experiments have already shown conclusive evidence supporting this idea.

As an interesting contrast, "outside groups" may influence aggressive behavior by expecting aggression from members of another group. This phenomenon is known as the "self-fulfilling prophecy" and has been attested in several areas of behavior. For instance, in Hawaii, Samoans and Filipinos are thought to be violent; this in turn makes them think of themselves as violent and makes them act in an aggressive manner. In reality, Samoans are placid, life loving people who in their homeland do not display the amount of aggression they have shown in Hawaii. While other factors enter into creating their over-aggressiveness, the self-fulfilling prophecy is certainly an active part of the complex.

Parents and or "significant others" also play a role in the creation of aggression in the individual in as much as they serve as models of aggression or non-aggression. Parents, in many instances, become models of aggression while engaged in the process of correcting aggressive behavior in their children. Punishment, by angering the child and providing him with an aggressive model, increases his own aggression and that increase stimulates parents to

¹⁰Berkowitz, *op. cit.*, 82.

further violence thereby creating a mutually reinforcing system.¹¹

Another element which needs to be considered, is the role that poor self-image plays in aggression. Psychologists conclude from their studies that highly aggressive youngsters tend to be low in ego strength and have a low frustration tolerance. In general, people with weak egos are unable to cope with insecurity, anxiety, fear, and frustration, all of which increases their chances of becoming aggressive or even psychopathic personalities.

Erik Erikson reinforces this theory; he feels that one factor which is at the root of aggression is identity diffusion. He states that a negative identity attempting to become positive is at the root of aggression and added that a perfect illustration was the national character of Germany after World War I. Humiliated at Versailles, economically subdued, money unit devaluated, they attempted to restore a positive identity through aggression. Much of this is operative in the Mexican also and more will be said about it in a later chapter.

In an aforementioned article, Erik Erikson puts forth a theory of aggression which may be properly called psycho-social or psycho-cultural. It was mentioned earlier

¹¹Roger Brown, *Social Psychology* (New York: Free Press, 1965), 389.

that the natural signaling system which animals use to acknowledge defeat in intra-species fighting was nullified by man's ability to create weapons which killed too fast without allowing enough time for signals or killed from afar without even allowing a close contact to exercise those signals. Erikson thinks that there is another way in which man's mind "helped" to worsen the situation. Man was able to create a tremendous variety of cultural and social forms which became "natural barriers among members of the same species. In other words, man has created a pseudo-species.

Erikson puts it this way:

. . . sociogenetic evolution has split mankind into pseudo-species, into tribes, nations, and religious castes and classes which bind their members into a pattern of individual and collective identity, but alas, reinforce that pattern by a mortal fear and a murderous hatred of other pseudo-species.¹²

Erikson's perception is, indeed, very accurate; one needs only to look at some of the historical and anthropological data available to find perfect examples of what he is talking about. One such example is totemism. Even within a certain tribe, a group would be related to a particular totem and other groups to others, and violence towards other groups is perfectly acceptable while toward members of the same totem group it is punished. Many of the early tribal names mean "the people" which indicates

¹²Erikson, *op. cit.*, 248.

the fact that such groups viewed others as other than people, usually a subhuman species.

Perfect examples of this are found in the Bible (and other books of religion) where the creation stories ignore other people or where the Ten Commandments order "Thou Shalt Not Kill" yet the Lord leads his people into henotheistic wars.

This continues to happen in several forms. Man divides himself into groups which feed his vestigial totemism; there are Lions or Elks. In sports, Rams versus Tigers are pitted against each other and in extreme cases of open aggression, like in war, enemies are considered infra-human. Many a drill instructor, during war years, brainwashes recruits to the fact that the enemy is less than human; they are monkeys, Japs, chooks, gooks, etc. It is almost amusing to go back and see some of the old World War II movies (which of course in some way influenced public opinion about the character of the enemy) and see that the German "Krauts" are shown as naive, simian, and plain infra-human. Or, Japanese in their Zeros are always bucktoothed, wear thick glasses, and do not display emotions.

Many places in the southern part of the United States beautifully illustrate the phenomenon of this pseudo-speciation. Sexual relationships across racial lines are labelled "miscegenation" and are punishable by law; hos-

pitals or blood banks segregate black from white blood; and even in the cemeteries they are kept separated. The phenomenon of pseudo-speciation seems to be a major component in the very complex problem of aggression and should be studied further, especially in light of the fact that ethnocentrism and a neo-nationalism seem to be in vogue.

III. EXISTENTIAL ETIOLOGICAL FACTORS

Biological and psychological discussions of aggression do not exhaust the possible sources of violence. There is another set of factors which begins to separate the human species from other animals and which is found among other species in a seminal form only as what some have called the "survival instinct." One must link the survival instinct with man's "life drive" because that which Freud called eros is in many ways related to that instinct in animals; among men, however, it is made more complex by man's own awareness of his eventual death. In this paper, this awareness and the factors that ensue from it are called "existential" because many of the Existentialist writers have concerned themselves with man's finitude, with man's existence.

Whether in the very readable novels and plays of Dostoyevsky, Kafka, Camus, and Sartre, or in the harder philosophical works, or in the theological speculations of

Kierkegaard and Tillich, the theme reappears as the dominant note of an otherwise polymorphous movement.

That man's awareness of his own finitude sets him apart from other animals is perfectly illustrated by Miguel de Unamuno's statement about man being a strange animal. In his *Del Sentimiento Tragico de la Vida* (*On the Tragic Sense of Life*), we read: "The Gorilla, the Chimpanzee, the Orangutan, and their fellows must think that man is a poor sick animal that even stores his dead ones. What for?"¹³

Paul Tillich from another perspective also states that one of the main differences that sets man apart from the animals is the awareness of his own finitude. "Man is not only finite, as is every creature; he is also aware of his finitude. And this awareness is 'anxiety.'"¹⁴ It might be argued that one does not need to take unnecessary pains to differentiate between the causes for aggression in men and animals; however, this is done here only to argue against a type of uninformed reductionism which argues for merely biological, physical or "territorial" imperatives behind aggression. While the role of all these must not be denied, it must be shown that man's aggression is caused more strongly by the awareness of his own finitude and that

¹³Miguel de Unamuno, *Del Sentimiento Tragico de la Vida* (Mexico: Esposa-Calpe Argentina, 1932), 25.

¹⁴Tillich, *op. cit.*, II, 34.

it is that awareness which in turn triggers all the other mechanisms of aggression which he shares with all other animals. Man's awareness of his own finitude makes him the most afraid of all species and consequently also the most aggressive of all.

It is painfully obvious that when one introduces this element one finds very little "scientific" data to corroborate what has been found out through philosophical investigations which point in the direction of this element in aggression. For instance, I. L. Javis, 1951 and Kardiner and Spiegel, 1947, explored mainly in retrospect to the war years, aggressive reactions to fear.¹⁵ While it should be granted that the fear that these investigators found may be quantitatively different from the existential fear, that is here argued for, qualitatively they are very much one and the same. Evidence from England, Germany, and Japan indicated that there was a rise in aggressive attitudes after air attacks. Berkowitz adds to these studies that indeed there is a relationship between fear and aggression; however, the more obviously noxious the situation becomes, he continues, the more the aggression diminishes and gives way to plain fear.¹⁶

¹⁵Berkowitz, *op. cit.*, 43.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 44.

Once more one sees the scientific evidence at hand is rather tenuous and that it fits almost because of a tour de force, however, this evidence, tenuous though it may be, does bear out that there is a direct relationship between fear of death or awareness of death and aggression. Furthermore, it is possible to argue that scientific evidence in this area is lacking mainly because scientists have paid little or no attention to existential insecurity, and therefore have not devised an objective way through which these assumptions can be tested. The role of existential insecurity in aggression is one of the frontiers that need to be more thoroughly explored.

Man's existential fear causes what has been called a hypertrophy of aggressive behavior which definitely makes him look sanguinary when compared with other species. Man attacks not only to eat, protect his mate and brood, or guard his territory; man attacks or defends because he believes that other species and even his own fellow man can put an end to his life. He sees his subjectness always threatened by the objectification which even the look of his fellow man brings upon him.

Sartre explored in several works the role which others play in arousing in the individual a sense of objectness and of fear. For Sartre the problem of Others is real; it is through Others, he says, that one establishes not a

relationship of love but one of shame. The Other is the one who awakens the individual to the sudden and frightful realization of his "Objectness." In *Baudelaire*, Sartre explains what he thinks the Other's "look" does for or rather against the individual; it makes him even more aware of his objectness, disrobing him of whatever subjectness he may have ever achieved and turning him into a thing. "Was not the function of the Other's look to transform him into a thing?"¹⁷

Sartre carried this idea to an even more dreadful conclusion; using Garcin as his mouthpiece in his play, "No Exit," he exclaims: ". . . I'm in Hell . . . with all those eyes . . . devouring me . . . Hell is--other people."¹⁸

The Other for Sartre then is a focus for conflict; all contact with the Other implies contest, a contest to remain a subject instead of a thing for others, to remain eternal instead of finite. Love therefore is impossible or fails for Sartre since it implies the intimacy of two subjectivities and this does not fit anywhere in the Sartrian scheme.

¹⁷Jean-Paul Sartre, *Baudelaire* (Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions, 1950), 119.

¹⁸Jean-Paul Sartre, *No Exit and Three Other Plays* (New York: Vintage, 1955), 46.

The repercussions of this position are sad, threatening, and catastrophic.

Every human act seems an act of attempted appropriation where the self tries to surround, take in, encompass Being. But because the other is inaccessible to this longing for identification, the concrete relations with Others must be pathological, provisional, *faute demieux*. There is no place in Sartre's system for the transcendent values of an optimistic sociology: the felicities of genuine communal feeling, or the transports of a selfless love.¹⁹

The Sartrian concept just advanced is backed by much of what psychology says about the nature of aggression. Aggression results from anger aroused by the thwarting of goal directed activity. Furthermore, aggression is more likely to occur when frustration causes lowering of self-esteem, as mentioned before. One's self-esteem is lowered to a great extreme when one reaches out for love and is met by "the other's look" which objectifies the person and annuls the possibility of love. Like all rejected lovers man must become aggressive; the object of love is disdained in a sour grapes attitude and once again it happens that one hurts only what one wants most--others.

One of Mexico's influential writers has picked up much of what Sartre says about the objectifying power of the other's look and has applied it to the Mexicans living in the United States. In his *Labyrinth of Solitude*, Paz

¹⁹Albert William Levi, *Philosophy and the Modern World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1959), 421.

says:

Something . . . characterizes the Mexicans you see in the streets. They have lived in the city for many years, wearing the same clothes and speaking the same language as the other inhabitants and many feel ashamed of their origin; yet no one would mistake them for authentic North Americans, I refuse to believe that physical features are as important as is commonly thought. What distinguishes them, I think, is their furtive, restless air; they act like persons who are wearing disguises, who are *afraid of a stranger's look because it could strip them and leave them stark naked.* [italics not in original] When you talk with them you observe that their sensibilities are like a pendulum, but one that has lost its reason and swings violently and erratically back and forth.²⁰

Much of protestant theology would agree with Sartre's analysis of man's condition (although it could not agree with Sartre's answers to that problem). It says that indeed man is too preoccupied with his self, very much afraid of losing his being, his existence.

In the third chapter of *The Self and the Dramas of History*, Niebuhr advances the idea that the universal inclination of the self to be more concerned with itself than to be embarrassed by its undue claims may be defined as "original sin." Furthermore, he goes on and compares this position with the Reformers' "bondage of the will" and says that this is exactly what they are talking about.²¹

²⁰Octavio Paz, *El Laberinto de la Soledad* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Economica, 1959), 13-17.

²¹Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Self and the Dramas of History* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), 18.

Niebuhr's concept of original sin parallels to a great degree Sartre's idea of "shame." It is man's consciousness of being an object for others that makes him retreat into himself because of the fear of annihilation (objectness) and projects him into a supreme preoccupation with the self. Niebuhr would agree with Sartre in that man is unable to practice love or to live in the community, though he would add that through the Grace of God man can and does actually achieve relationships of subjectness with the Other.

The fear of other then is based on man's "existential insecurity." This insecurity is most of the time sublimated into creative competitiveness from foot races to races to the moon and other planets. Unfortunately, this does not always succeed in curbing our fear of others, in fact, sometimes this type of competition leads to more aggressive behavior. Existential insecurity becomes destructive many times only after the acceptable channels of sublimation or symbolization have been closed.

Paul Tillich is again of great help, because in his analysis of man's finitude he points out precisely what is conveyed here in this section of the paper. In *Systematic Theology, Volume II*, we have the following:

The destructive character of existential insecurity and doubt is manifest in the way man tries to escape despair. He tries to make absolute a finite security or a finite certainty. The threat of a breakdown leads to the establishment of defenses, some of which are brutal, some fanatical, some dishonest, and all insuf-

ficient and destructive; for there is no security and certainty within finitude. The destructive force may be directed against those who represent the threat to false security and certainty, especially against those who compete or contradict. War and persecution are partly dependent on these dialectics. If, however, the defenses prove to be insufficient, the destructive force is directed against the subject himself.²²

There is a sense in which one can say that aggression, the structures of destruction are ontological or metaphysical. This is so because they grow out of an ontological reality in man, his finitude. Camus, (Metaphysical Rebel), Unamuno (man of flesh and bones), and Tillich (existential insecurity), all are saying that this condition is universal. Therefore, for the purposes of this paper it must be pointed out that the Mexican does not in any way escape all of what has been mentioned here. In fact, he is perhaps more subject to many of these because of the way in which this universal manifests itself in this cultural and historical pattern.

The Latin peoples in the European Continent have had the "tragic sense of life" that Unamuno talks about, and this was transplanted to Mexico where it amalgamated with another just as tragic sense of life and death as expressed so often in many of the songs and poems of the literary giants of pre-Columbian Mexico. One such poem taken from the Songs of Huehotzingo is inscribed in the

²²Tillich, *op. cit.*, II, 73.

entrance of one of the halls of the Museum of Anthropology in Mexico. It reads:

Must I leave this way?
Like the flowers that perished?
Will nothing remain of my name?
Nothing of my fame here on earth?
At least flowers, at least songs!!

Another classic poem which carries this tragic sense of life is entitled "Mystery of Life" and it says:

Oh, we do not come to earth for a second time
Oh princess, oh Chichimecans
Let us enjoy ourselves
Are flowers taken along to
The Kingdom of the Dead?
We are only on borrowed time!
It is true, indeed we leave
Yes it is true, indeed we leave
For sure we leave the songs and the flowers
And the earth too!!
We are only on borrowed time,
It is true, indeed we leave.²³

Man's existential insecurity many times is protected by his belief that his group, ideology, nation, or religious faith somehow will survive in spite of his own death. It is easy to see then why a threat to a system, nation, etc., means a threat to someone's avenue to immortality. Religious wars can be better understood, though not condoned, when seen in this light.

The causes of aggression are manifold and complex; many books have been written on parts of the problem alone

²³Salvador Novo, *Una Visita a la Sala Mexica* (Mexico: Secretaria de Educacion Publica, 1964), 50.

and it would be presumptuous to think that the analysis here presented is exhaustive. The nature of this work precludes any further discussion of these causes since it is necessary to show how these "universals" become operative in the culture and life of Mexico.

CHAPTER III

THE MOTHER ARCHETYPE

It was stated earlier that a discussion of Jung's contributions to the study of aggression would be postponed because of the peculiar way in which his work contributes to the progress and observations in this paper. This chapter will explore the way in which Jung deals with symbols, the relation of these to archetypes, and the role of the "collective unconscious." Special attention will be paid to the archetype of the Feminine which is highly correlated with aggression among men as well as the bad treatment that women receive. The exploration of these concepts is by no means exhaustive, and it must be admitted that the complexity of Jung's thought requires the interpretation of others; therefore, a heavy reliance on secondary sources has been necessary.

It is important to keep in mind that when one deals with depth psychology one is dealing with assumptions and concepts that are highly abstract and theoretical; this, however, should not diminish the validity of many of these observations. For instance, when the nature of "archetypes" is discussed further on, one must not think of a concrete

entity "inside" the human personality. The only way in which one can at this point interpret the nature of this and many other concepts in depth psychology, is to say that this is a short hand term for an explanation of certain outward manifestations of human behavior which are rooted in the depth of the human personality. With this warning always in mind, a discussion follows about the nature of symbols, the relations of these to complexes and archetypes, and the connection of all these with the "collective unconscious."

I. THE COMPLEX

Complexes, we are told by Jung, provide the royal road to the unconscious. One of the easy, but incomplete, ways of defining complexes is simply to say that they are:

. . . disturbances of the psychic process which have their seat of origin in a realm which is beyond the objective control of the conscious mind and which manifests itself only when the threshold of attention is lowered.¹

These "disturbances" were at the beginning called "feeling-toned complexes," or "feeling-toned groups of representations." Later on they were simply called "complexes."

¹Jolande Jacobi, *Complex/Archetype/Symbol in the Psychology of C. G. Jung* (New York: Pantheon, 1959), 7.

Jolande Jacobi expounds one of the ways by which Jung arrived at the conclusion that such things as complexes needed to be assumed, the association test. She does not discuss the nature of this test at any length but merely limits herself to report the results.

In the association test . . . it was shown that the speed and the quality of the reactions to "stimulus words" selected in accordance with a definite principle are individually conditioned. A prolonged reaction time when the subject is first exposed to the stimulus, and the faults (gaps or falsifications of memory) occurring when the subject attempts to recall during a repetition of the experiment the answers given through spontaneous association, are not accidental but are determined with incredible precision by the disturbing effects of unconscious contents sensitive to the action of a complex. The nature and duration of the symptoms of disturbance consequently permit inferences as to the feeling tone and depth of the affect laden contents concealed in the background of the psyche.²

According to Jung, all people may have complexes, but the fact that is seldom recognized is that complexes may "have people." This observation is of importance to this paper because in a way the kind of actions that many Mexicans perform have a compulsive character, and that leads one to believe that in some way they are "possessed."

Another point of equal importance is made by Jung when he states that:

²*Ibid.*, 7-8.

. . . complexes obviously represent a *kind of inferiority* [italics not in the original] in the broadest sense--a statement I must immediately qualify by saying that to have complexes does not necessarily indicate inferiority.³

The reason that this is of importance for this paper is that most of the psychologists who have studied the Mexican have discovered a very real, even if sometimes latent, inferiority complex.

Complexes are inseparably linked with the individual's private life. Freud emphasized the emotional experiences of early years as being at the root of many feeling-toned configurations. Jung also recognizes the importance of early childhood experiences but goes on to add the following:

Certain complexes . . . arise on account of painful or distressing experiences in a person's life. . . . These produce unconscious complexes of a personal nature. . . . But there are others that come from quite a different source. . . . At bottom they have to do with irrational contents of which the individual had never been conscious before, and which he therefore vainly seeks to discover somewhere outside him. . . . While the contents of the personal unconscious are felt as belonging to one's own psyche, the contents of the collective unconscious seem alien, as if they came from outside. . . . The parallel with the primitive belief in souls and spirits is obvious: souls correspond to the autonomous complexes of the personal unconscious,⁴ and spirits to those of the collective unconscious.

It will be necessary later on to say more about the

³*Ibid.*, 21.

⁴*Ibid.*, 22-23.

"collective unconscious" but this will come in a later paragraph. At the moment it is necessary to discuss the nature of the "archetypes."

II. THE ARCHETYPES

The concept of the archetype is of tremendous importance in the psychology of Jung, and it has a great bearing on the investigations and results of this paper. The archetype is a concept which is very slippery and at times challenges one's ability to analyse and expound. By definition archetypes are factors and motifs that arrange the psychic elements into images. These can be recognized only from the effects they produce. They exist pre-consciously but do not have an independent ontological character; rather, they come into existence with life itself.

One of Jung's disciples, Erich Neumann, has written material helpful to the understanding of the nature of the archetype. In his two volume work, *The Origins and History of Consciousness*, which is an attempt to outline the archetypal stages in the development of consciousness, Neumann says the following about the archetype:

They [the archetypes] are the pictorial forms of the instincts, for the unconscious reveals itself to the conscious mind in images which, as in dreams and fantasies, initiate the process of conscious reaction and assimilation. . . . The archetypal structural

elements of the psyche are psychic organs upon whose functioning the well-being of the individual depends, and whose injury has disastrous consequences.⁵

Neumann in another work says that when one deals with the archetypes, one must distinguish between its emotional dynamic components, its symbolism, its material component, and its structure. Concerning its dynamic component, Jung states that every mood that takes hold of the entire personality is an expression of the dynamic effect of the archetype whether positive or negative, acknowledged or ignored, conscious or unconscious.

Here then the intimate connection between complexes and archetypes can be established. Complexes are one of the many expressions of the dynamic component of the archetypes; in fact, at times they can be equated with the archetypes.

Insofar as the "nucleus" of the complex is conceived as a dynamic "nodal point" in the structure of the collective unconscious, it may be equated, in regard to its nature and operation, with the archetype.⁶

The material component of the archetype is the content that is apprehended by consciousness; it is the part of the archetype which one may assimilate, or that is potentially assimilable, minus the emotional character.

The structure of an archetype is the composite

⁵Erich Neumann, *The Origins and History of Consciousness* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), xv.

⁶Jacobi, *op. cit.*, 121.

network of psychic organization which includes dynamism, symbolism and sense content, as well as that unifying center, the intangible, slippery "archetype an sich."⁷ In reality, as stated before, the "archetype an sich"--in itself--can only be assumed to exist and stated as a necessary "a priori." We know about an archetype only through the effects it produces. Such effects may be seen in the rites, myths, dreams, fantasies, the creative and destructive work of man and in his *symbols*.

III. SYMBOLS

Symbols are one of the garbs, one of the expressions of the archetypes. The symbols are the manifest visibility of the archetype, corresponding to its latent invisibility.

Symbols like the archetype itself, possess a dynamic character and a material component. They take hold of the human personality as a whole, arouse it and fascinate it, and attract consciousness, which strives to interpret them.⁸

When the archetype "comes afloat" to consciousness, to space and time, and when it can be perceived in some form, then we can speak of a symbol. A complex, as stated

⁷Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother* (New York: Pantheon, 1956), 3-5.

⁸*Ibid.*, 7.

before, is also an expression of the archetype in the here and now, but we can say that the basic difference is that the complex is essentially a "symptom" and really a "non-tangible," while the symbol usually is "image-like." Jacobi explains that the dividing lines are fine and not easy to draw and that in principle complexes and symbols are equivalent.

In principle, according to Jung, complex and symbol are equivalent in many respects; i.e., insofar as both are rooted in an archetypal nucleus of meaning and in the collective unconscious. Thus there is some justification for using the terms archetype, complex, and symbol interchangeably in regard to their essential meaning.⁹

Symbols may be defined in many ways, but here, in this paper, it is necessary that definitions hinted at by depth psychology be maintained. This definition of course may be in agreement with many other definitions of symbols and there may be parallels as well. Here the following definition shall be used: A symbol is the image-like expression that channels the contents of the human psyche to the conscious surface of the individual.

Many chapters have been written about the differences between signs and symbols; here for brevity's sake, it must be said along with Jung and Cassirer that signals are part of the physical world of being while symbols are

⁹Jacobi, *op. cit.*, 122.

part of the human world of meaning. Or as Jung puts it:

Every view which interprets the symbolic expression as an analogue or an abbreviated designation of a known thing is *semiotic* [concerning signs]. A view which interprets the symbolic expression as the best possible formulation of a relatively unknown thing which cannot for that reason be more clearly or characteristically represented is *symbolic*.¹⁰

Jung, like Cassirer and Tillich, also holds that man cannot create symbols. However, up to a point, the symbol is determined by the total constellation of the collective unconscious and the actual situation of the individual in whom such a symbol may appear. Neumann interprets it in this way:

When we say that the archetype and the symbol are spontaneous and independent of consciousness, we mean that the ego as the center of consciousness does not actively participate in the genesis and emergence of the symbol or the archetype, or, in other words, that consciousness cannot "make" a symbol or "choose" to experience an archetype. This by no means precludes a relation of the archetype or symbol to the totality of the personality and consciousness; for the manifestations of the unconscious are not only a spontaneous expression of unconscious processes but also reactions to the conscious situation of the individual, and these reactions, as we see most commonly in connection with dreams, are of a *compensatory nature*. This means that the appearance of archetypal images and symbols is in part determined by a man's individual typological structure, by the situation of the individual, his conscious attitude, his age, and so on.¹¹

The symbols as uncreated transformers of energy are at the root of the religious feelings and of the religions

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 80.

¹¹Neumann, *The Great Mother*, 10.

of the world according to Jung. As a transformer of energy, the symbol has an eminently healing character; it helps to restore wholeness and health. In many languages and religions the concepts of wholeness, health, and salvation are synonymous terms. In a very real sense, says Jung, religions are psychotherapeutic systems.

Experience shows that religions are in no sense conscious constructions but that they arise from the natural life of the unconscious psyche and somehow give adequate expression to it. . . . Religions are psychotherapeutic systems in the truest sense of the word . . . they express the whole range of the psychic problem in powerful images; they are the avowal and recognition of the soul and at the same time the revelation of the soul's nature.¹²

IV. THE COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS

In the preceding pages, the concept of the collective unconscious has been mentioned. After showing the very intimate relationships between this concept and the archetypes, complexes, and symbols; it becomes necessary now to deal with this concept in a more detailed manner.

Jung draws a sharp distinction between a "personal unconscious" and a "collective unconscious." This collective unconscious consists of the typical patterns of human behavior, of the "inherited potentiality of psychic func-

¹²Jacobi, *op. cit.*, 105 f.

tioning pure and simple." It is the mysterious shadow realm where the archetypes dwell, a supra-personal matrix which is the fundamental psychic conditions accumulated over the history of mankind.¹³

It is through the collective unconscious that the archetypes are "inherited."¹⁴ In a sense the collective unconscious is the sum total of all previous archetypes. One must qualify this and say that personal archetypes do exist, but even these are grounded upon collective or universal archetypes which in turn find their seat in the collective unconscious.

This collective unconscious is the "unlimited sum of fundamental psychich conditions accumulated over millions of years . . . the inner equivalent of Creation."¹⁵ The depths of the collective unconscious still contain everything they ever contained and in dreams these contents speak to us in a language whose images have been present in the souls of men from time immemorial.¹⁶ In other words, the collective unconscious is the reservoir of basic human psychic experiences, such a reservoir is neutral in character since it combines "good and bad" elements. These

¹³*Ibid.*, 20.

¹⁴*vide supra*, 39.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 59.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 161.

elements acquire value only when they are exteriorized and confronted with consciousness.

If one tried to represent the collective unconscious in a topographical or spatial manner--and this Jung would not be prone to do--it would not be adequate to think about it as "up" or "down" (as one might do with the personal unconscious), but rather as "over, around, under, or beside consciousness."¹⁷

Following Jung's line of reasoning, and without doing violence to his thinking, it is possible to posit the existence of a "national, cultural, or ethnic unconscious." Certainly this cultural unconscious would be grounded on the collective unconscious but would contain elements that are common to the people who share a common cultural environment and heritage.

As stated before, the number of archetypes is unlimited. Since the symbols and complexes are based on archetypes, they too are very numerous. In this paper, the archetype, symbol, and complex that is of central importance is the archetype of the "feminine," especially in its "Great Mother" variation or expression and its correspondent symbols and complexes. This archetype will be seen in the context of the specific manifestations of it in the origin,

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 61.

history, and development of the Mexican culture.

V. THE ARCHETYPE OF THE FEMININE

As was stated in the introductory pages, the "Archetype of the Feminine" has been explored thoroughly and effectively by Erich Neumann. What is presented here in this section is a summary of some of the observations which Neumann made which are very pertinent to the more detailed analysis and exposition of the expressions of this archetype in the Mexican culture.

First of all, it must be noted that when the term "feminine" is used in reference to archetypes, it is not necessarily in reference to biological sex-linked femininity but to a symbolic expression. The symbol, as was seen before, is transpersonal and archetypal in character; it may be projected upon persons, but it is not personal. With this always in mind, one can state that the "Archetypal Feminine" is founded or based upon the archetype of the "Uroboros," an archetype which is usually symbolized by the mandala or the eternal wheel and which stands for the unity that at one personal and primordial time the ego and the culture enjoyed.

The Archetypal Feminine "contains" both the maternal uroboros and the "uroboric Great Mother." All these are

really variations and progressions toward greater differentiations of the feminine by the ego. In the case of the maternal uroboros, the uroboric character is more dominant than the maternal. The opposite is true of the uroboric Great Mother where the Maternal Feminine character is dominant over the uroboric.

The two characters of the Feminine need to be distinguished: the elementary and the transformative. The aspect of the Feminine which tends to subject the ego, to keep it from independence and motion, and which is usually symbolized by the Great Round or the Great Container, is what is referred to as the "elementary character of the Feminine." This character in turn has positive and negative aspects, but by and large the elementary character is the foundation of the conservative and static elements in the life of an individual or a culture.

The transformative character on the other hand, is the basis of the dynamic element of the psyche and the culture. Both of these characters are projected upon it with a dominance of one or the other, or with both held in tension. A "Terrible Mother" or a Witch or an oppressive mother (as perceived, that is) contain a preponderance of the negative elementary character, while a Good Great Mother or a cornucopia is the visualization or symbolization of the transformative character of the Feminine.

Applying this to cultures we must note here what Bachofen found to be true in the anthropological and psychological research that he reports in his work *Das Mutterrecht* (*The Matriarchate*). Bachofen states in that book that the elementary character of the feminine is typical of the Matriarchy.¹⁸ Matriarchy here is meant in a psychological sense and corresponds to a sociological patriarchy. Applying this to the Mexican culture, one can say that it is true that in Mexico, as it will be shown later, where a sociological patriarchy exists, there is a dominance of the negative elementary character and a psychological matriarchy.

A suppression and/or imitation of the transformative character of the Feminine seems to be at the basis of the blood sacrifice performed by cultures where the elementary character is dominant. (This seems to be true of the Aztec blood sacrifices.) Women experience the transformative element in a very personal, dramatic and perceivable way through their own transformation mysteries of menstruation (spilling of blood), pregnancy (blood transformed into flesh), and nursing (blood transformed into milk). These palpable transformations are reacted to by the male in a positive or negative way or both, depending on the degree

¹⁸Johann Jakob Bachofen, *Das Mutterrecht* (Stuttgart: Kraus and Hoffman, 1861), *et passim*.

of dominance of the elementary or transformative character in his ego. In the case of many of the Aztec blood sacrifices, they were partly ways of re-enacting transformation mysteries. Unable to spill blood from their bodies, they violently spilled it from the bodies of the victims (many of them women) they sacrifice to the gods.

The Great Mother is a third and more differentiated archetype and symbol with definite feminine-maternal characteristics. This may contain both the positive and negative characters in one symbol or may be further differentiated into a Good Mother and a Terrible Mother.

As the archetype of the Feminine gets closer to the surface of the conscious existence it passes through the Anima, an archetype which is the ego's perception of femininity without necessarily referring to the mother aspect, and finally it is projected to the "outside" to humans, goddesses, and to multiple other symbols of the Feminine.

There are many interesting details that are omitted because they do not further the progress of this paper. What is of supreme importance, however, is that the discussion of the facts already mentioned about the nature of the characters of the Feminine and the relations which seem to exist between these elements and the matriarchy, goddesses and blood sacrifices need to be kept in mind as

this paper proceeds to describe the manifestations of the Feminine in the Mexican culture from its known historical past through the present.

This chapter, along with the preceeding introductory chapters, sets the stage for the discussion of the particular cultural and historical ways in which aggression has been caused and fostered in the world of the Mexican.

CHAPTER IV

THE FEMININE AND AGGRESSION IN THE MEXICAN CULTURE

The causes of aggression as stated in the preceding chapters are universals, that is, they affect or have affected all men at one time or another. It is now necessary to see the specific ways in which these universals find expression in the Mexican culture. It is always important to remember that, first of all, these particular expressions of aggression are linked to all the universals mentioned and secondly, that the "archetype of the feminine" seems to be the most significant etiological feature in the constellation of factors that contribute to violence in Mexico.

To again underscore the relation of universals to specific historico-cultural manifestations, one may resort to the experts like Tillich.

Another question has come to the fore in contemporary sociological and psychological analyses. It is the question of how far the structures of destruction are universally human and how far they are historically conditioned. The answer is that their historical appearance is possible only because of their universal, structural presence. Estrangement is a quality of the structure of existence, but the way in which estrangement is predominantly manifest is a matter of history. There are always structures of destruction in history,

but they are possible only because there are structures of finitude which can be transformed into structures of estrangement.¹

In this chapter then, the universals will be related to specifics in the Mexican culture. This will be done by exploring the dimensions of depth, horizontality, and verticality. Depth refers to the subconscious psychodynamic dimension of the individuals in a culture; horizontality refers to the social, historical (in the narrower sense of history) dimension, and verticality to the religio-mythological aspect of a culture.

These aforementioned dimensions are presented separately only for descriptive and analytic purposes; however, it must be understood from the outset that in general these dimensions are connected and interdependent. This, of course, will lead to some overlapping in this presentation, but a difference of emphasis will be noted whenever an overlap occurs.

It also must be understood that this paper attempts to trace the Feminine and other causes of aggression in the history of the Mexican culture in and through what is considered the leading or mainstream culture of Mexico, that which found its greatest expression in the Aztec civilization and which did manage to survive much better than the

¹Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), II, 74.

other existing cultures which also formed an integral part of the past and history of Mexico. The Aztec civilization blended many of the characteristics of the other cultures in Mexico.

As this work progresses through the history of Mexico, the perception of the Feminine is traced mainly in and through the lower class people, many of whom are much closer to the Aztec heritage than to the Spanish. However, from time to time some of the significant ways in which the Feminine is perceived in the middle and upper classes will be pointed out as well. This chapter deals basically with the ancient past.

I. ORIGINS

The beginnings of the history of Mexico are lost in the very distant past. Shreds of archeological evidence point to the possible existence of man in North America as far back as possibly 20,000 years. However, no perceptible culture can be inferred or attested until about 5,000 to 4,000 B.C.

The earliest known settlement in Central Mexico has been called Pre-Classic and dates from about 1,350 B.C. The archeological evidence for this settlement was found in the area known as El Arbolillo. This settlement, accord-

ing to Dr. George C. Vaillant, flourished about 1,100 B.C.² Loredó and Sotelo Inclán report that in the excavations made there at El Arbolillo clay figures of naked women were found.³ These clay figures belong to Neolithic times and seem to indicate that women were already considered important in some connection with burial customs. The number and variety of female figures increases as the stratigraphic studies progress toward the more recent past and seem to indicate that a matriarchal culture preceded the patriarchal Aztec world. Thus what Neumann mentions as a possibility in *The Great Mother* seems to be a reality. It can be safely assumed that with the exception of "Teotihuacán I" all the Pre-Classic cultures of Mexico were matriarchal at least in their religion.

There is also some significant evidence that a political matriarchate existed before the Aztec times, because even as late as 1524, during the epoch of the conquest of Mexico by Spain, women in some places were obviously leaders in the political life of some groups. The following is an excerpt from the fourth letter of Cortez to his superiors. (Hernán Cortez was the captain who led the Spanish forces

²George C. Vaillant, *The Aztecs of Mexico* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1962), *et passim*.

³Elvira de Loredó and Jesús Sotelo Inclán, *Historia de México* (Mexico: Trillas, 1964), 38.

in the conquest of Mexico.)

I sent an officer and some people but they did not seem to find the same cooperation we had found before; on the contrary, they seemed to be getting ready to fight for their territory. This officer was smart enough to seize a woman from one of the towns who seemed to be obeyed in the whole region. This made the rebellious people come to terms with us because she summoned all the chiefs and told them to obey whatever I commanded . . . ⁴

Mythology and religion are sometimes clues to actual situations and if one culls the exaggerations an element of the historical seems to be present. For instance, much of what is mythology in Shinto in Japan is actual in Okinawan religion and was probably historical in ancient Japan.

The mythology of the Aztecs is full of references to powerful women and great goddesses and although many of the religious accounts were destroyed by the Spaniards, some accounts remain and it is possible to reconstruct a fair amount of the Nahuatl cosmology and mythology. (Nahuatl is a generic term which refers to a group of tribes of which the Aztecs were the most powerful and most representative.)

The Nahuatls pictured the surface of the earth as a great disc at the center of the universe surrounded by water. The universe was divided in four quadrants each of which had a great number of symbols. The numbers four, two,

⁴Aniceto Aramoni, *Psicoanálisis de la Dinámica de un Pueblo* (Mexico: B. Costa-Amic, 1967), 79.

three, and thirteen were cryptic numbers. They thought of themselves as situated in front of the West, contemplating the progress of the sun. The house of the sun was situated in the "country of the color red." To the left of the path of the sun was the color blue (South). In front of the sun was the road of light, fertility and life symbolized by the color white, and finally, the North was the black quadrant of the universe, the "land of the dead."

Above the earth there were thirteen heavens and nine infernos below. In the center of all was the metaphysical Omeyocan or place of duality.⁵ There in Omeyocan dwelt the dual generating principle Ometeotl. This androgynous supreme deity contained the male and female principles which came into full existence when he, like the Hindu-Aryan Brahma, fell asunder.

The primordial pair, Omtecutli (Lord Two) and Omecihuatl (Lady Two) are the Aztec equivalents of the Shinto Izanagi and Izanami. Also stemming from Ometeotl were the four elements of the earth. These were in a dynamic relation similar to the one expounded by Heraclitus in Greek times, being brought together by love and apart by strife.

These abstract gods were not the popular gods

⁵cf. uroboros, 48-49.

however. Among the popular ones there were some interesting ones, like Moyocatzin, the god who invented himself. Ruling over a myriad of gods there was a strange trinity made up of Huitzilopochtli, a masculine god, patron of war; Coatlicue, feminine mother of gods, and Quetzalcoatl who in his name and characteristics shares and exemplifies the best qualities of the feminine and the masculine. (Literally, Quetzalcoatl means "Feathered Serpent." The serpent was a feminine symbol and the feathers or the birds masculine.)

A more detailed description of Coatlicue is forthcoming, since she is the embodiment of the Aztec perception and, as seen before, projection of the Feminine. At this time, however, it is necessary to see other mythological stories which are indications of the overthrow of the matriarchate.

The birth of Huitzilopochtli (beginning of the patriarchate?) happened thus: On the mountain range called Coatepec close to Tula, there once lived a woman known as Coatlicue, the mother of the stars known as the Centzonhuitznahuac among whom was a daughter, Coyolxauqui, the moon (the frustrated heiress to the throne?). Each day, the mother, a priestess, swept the mountains of Coatepec. Miraculously she conceived a child; Coyolxauqui called her brothers and told them that their mother had dishonored all of them and that they should kill her. When the Centzon-

huitznahuac were approaching Coatlicue, she became scared but the child spoke to her from the womb telling her not to fear because he knew what he was supposed to do. When the Centzonhuitznahuac were going to kill Coatlicue, Huitzilopochtli was born, armed and dressed like a warrior. He killed most of his brothers and ordered that his sister should be dismembered and her head placed in the Coatepec range.

Aramoni relates the same myth with some of the additional changes that had been recorded by Friar Bernardino de Sahagun. Sahagun says that Huitzilopochtli was a man of great might, some sort of Aztec Hercules who upon his death was deified.

Another myth, also reported by Aramoni, states the following:

Coyolxauh was the oldest sister of the Centzonhuitznahuac. When he [Huitzilopochtli] ate them it was midnight and at dawn his vassals, the Mexicas, saw that they all were opened in the chest, that nothing was left of their hearts, that Huitzilopochtli ate them all.⁶

In still another myth, Copil, the son of Malinalxochitl (perhaps another female ruler) started another rebellion against Huitzilopochtli which ends in the same tragic way.

⁶Aramoni, *op. cit.*, 56-58.

Very well my mother, I shall look him up and I shall destroy him and his parents and followers . . . and Copil was captured in Tepetzinco. After his death he [Huitzilopochtli] beheaded him and took his heart out.⁷

Although one must grant that it is easy to find here parallels of the myths which occur in many other cultures, the reappearance of the "hero with the thousand faces," it still remains that there are marked differences which seem to be conditioned by the history of the Aztecs. In these stories, mythology becomes a way of re-telling how the matriarchate was overthrown and also an explanation for the origin of the blood sacrifices. The Codices which have survived and which tell part of the history of the Aztecs present even more evidence. These pieces will show that there was a matriarchate and that it was overthrown, violently in some cases and in others more "voluntarily." From the *Annals of Cuauhitlan*, one may read:

Year Six Tochtli to Seven Acatl. In this year Lady Xiutlacuilolxochitzin, who reigned in Cuautitlan for twelve years, died. In this year Lady Iztacxillotzin, who ruled Cuauhtitlan, was enthroned.⁸

Years later, even under the rule of men, women take important places in the decision making processes as well as in religious ceremonies. The Mexicayotl Chronicle talks of a woman who carried the god Huitzilopochtli during

⁷*Ibid.*, 57.

⁸*Ibid.*, 27-30.

processions. The name of this woman was Chimalma, she and three other men carried the supreme deity of the Aztecs.

In the *Annals of Quautinchan*, it is read:

But upon our knowing that he would not be our king any more, the Chimalpanecas intervened. A woman, full of wrath said to them: "Will he Lord over us? Is it that Ayapancatl is not worthy?"⁹

In reference to the transfer of power, that is to the change from matriarchy into patriarchy, the *Annals of Cuautitlan* record an instance where a woman commands that a king should rule:

This is the relation of the Chichimecans of old who said that when the rule of the Chichimecans began a woman named Itzpapalotl convened them and told them: "Your king shall be Huactli."¹⁰

Not all the transfers of power were as easy as in our last example, here in the *Annals of Cuauhtitlan* we find a striking parallel to what some of the myths relate in an exaggerated form. "Year Ten Tecpatl. In this year Lady Ehuatlycuetzin was killed. She was killed with arrows by the Chichimecans in the place known as Callacohuayan."¹¹ It is obvious that these women were important or else their names would not have been preserved or even mentioned.

After the political matriarchate was dissolved,

⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 27.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 29.

women lost importance in a gradual manner. Some were allowed to continue in the role of priestesses and in some cases their advice was still heard. However, as time passed women became less and less important. By the beginning of the sixteenth century, the province of their influence had been reduced to the home and to the total and unconditional service of men. The masculine world into which the women entered engulfed them so much that there has not been even to this day, much questioning of the status quo. Instead a blind acceptance of it with submission and abnegation as the highest virtues to which a woman could aspire; virtues which usually were fulfilled as a wife and mother.

From the moment a girl was born she was told by the midwife what her lot in life was supposed to be. The following is reported by Aramoni and is taken from the birth rites.

My daughter and my lady, you have now arrived to this world; you have been sent by our Lord who is everywhere. You have come to this place of weariness, of travail and sadness where the cold winds are felt. Notice my daughter that from the middle part of your body I cut your cord, because this is the way it has been foreordained by your father and mother Yoaltecutli, the Lord of the night, and Yoalcititl, goddess of the baths. You shall dwell in the home as the heart dwells in the body. You will not go out of the house, you will not go anywhere. You shall be as the ashes in the fireplace, as the place where the pots are laid. This is the place where our Lord buries you;

you must work here and your duties shall be to fetch water and to mill corn. You shall sweat there by the ashes and the fireplace.¹²

Women were further warned not to indulge in adultery, to be loyal wives and good mothers. In short, women were reduced to sex objects, bearers of children for the war, makers of tortillas and sweepers of floors.

Meanwhile men had attained a higher and definitely superior status. Their dwelling place was not the home but the world, the battle field. The arrival of a baby boy was greeted with gladness, he could be educated and trained for that which the Aztecs knew how to do better, make war.

The male children would remain with their mothers until the time when they were five years old. During this time a very dependent relationship was established between the mother and the child. This seemed to make the separation even more traumatic. The child would leave the protective maternal-feminine world and would enter suddenly into the aggressive male-oriented, male directed Calmecac or Tepochalli, the school of war. There he learned to be a very masculine man, learned to win, to dominate, to be cruel, proud and with a great superficial or conscious superiority feeling. When one compares this with what was mentioned in earlier chapters, it is easy to see that aggressive models were provided at an early age and that

¹²*Ibid.*, 67.

the group condoned and rewarded violence.

In his war and blood sacrifices the Aztec male would try to overcome his inability to create by his ability to destroy. In this an almost manic desire to destroy his sense of inferiority before women seemed to come afloat. Not only is he envious of women because of their ability to create, his own unconscious still contains images which constantly remind him of the real superiority that at one time women held over men. Against this he rebels in and through his bloody wars and rituals. He too, like women, can spill blood.

The former rulers slowly lost political and then religious leadership until eventually the Feminine in the "outside" was almost lost. The Feminine had disappeared as an outside influence, but only as an outside influence. Her disappearance in the outside world was countered by the intensification of her existence in the subconscious of the Aztec. Now she reigned more than ever but as anxiety, and fear, and inferiority inside of a man who, because he now had suppressed her from his outside world, carried her inside and could not deal with her openly and maturely. There she dwelt, as a negative or positive motivation in the deep realms of the unconscious, bursting into the open through myth, ritual, and symbol in the Aztec world of men.

II. COATLICUE: PARAMOUNT AMBIVALENCE

Four goddesses, really four aspects of the Feminine, are present in and through Aztec mythology: Coatlicue, Cihuacoatl, Tlalzolteotl, and Tonantzin. Of these, the most representative, the most powerful, and the most ubiquitous is Coatlicue, the one with the skirt of serpents, the Mother of Gods. In her, the negative and positive aspects of the Feminine meet. She is like mother earth, life giver and life taker, protector and enemy. There are several representations of her and many myths where she is mentioned. She is the mother of the god of war, Huitzilopochtli,¹³ and the mother of the Aztec nation. Of the many statues of Coatlicue, the one that is now at the new Museum of Anthropology and History in Mexico City and which was the object of a thorough study by the famous indigenous artist of Mexico, Justino Fernandez, is without doubt the one that deserves more attention.

Before Fernandez's study is introduced, it is interesting to present a report of Coatlicue's discovery and the opinion of Leo Katz about this fantastic monolithic structure.

¹³ cf. Huitzilopochtli, 59-60.

The ancient Aztec legends told of a powerful earth-goddess, Coatlicue, the mother of Huitzilopochtli, the Lord of the Universe. A grotesque [note the adjectives used by some to describe Coatlicue] five to six and a half foot high andresite figure of this deity was discovered in 1790, under what had been the main plaza of the Aztec capital, Tenochtitlan, by a pious Spanish churchman who, fearing the demoniacal power, swiftly buried it again. It was rediscovered by Alexander von Humboldt in 1803 and was placed on public exhibition. . . . Among the scholars who have penetrated beyond the macabre semblance of Coatlicue is Leo Katz, a painter, educator, and authority on pre-Columbian art . . . he brought the concept of the great mother and fertility goddess as close to our comprehension as some of the theogonies of the Greeks and Hebrews. . . . Behind the Aztec concept of this deity, projected more than six centuries ago, lies a highly human story . . . Katz and other scholars have indicated that mortal attributes are too weak even to suggest the cosmic power of Coatlicue, who continuously devours the sun as it rises from and sets into the earth, represented by her massive body, the source of food, sustainer of life and messenger of death. Nowhere in the history of art, according to Katz, has a single monument achieved such a complete synthesis of human and abstract universal relations.¹⁴

These comments by Katz do Coatlicue some justice, but no one has ever made as fair an appraisal of this piece of religious art as Justino Fernandez. He does his utmost to remain objective in his report although he admits his "love affair" with Coatlicue from the outset of the study. In the first two thirds of his book, Fernandez presents a critical evaluation of the opinions of thirty-three critics of the indigenous art of Mexico. Some references are directed specifically to Coatlicue, but most of the opin-

¹⁴Alma Reed, *The Ancient Past of Mexico* (New York: Crown, 1966), 70.

ions refer to the whole art of Mexico.

Fernandez finds that most of the critics are too bound by their cultures and their theories. Some of the critics judge Coatlicue only as a piece of art. Fernandez tries in his own presentation to enter the world of the Aztec and inquire into the forces which shaped such a figure. He remarks quite rightly that "pure art," art for art's sake, is a recent and Western phenomenon. He notes that Greek and Medieval art were so determined by religion that one could not separate the one from the other, and he concludes that this is the case in the Aztec world especially with respect to Coatlicue.

Fernandez proceeds then to examine in detail this mass of symbols. First of all, he dismisses the adjectives of "horrible" and monstrous and proceeds to look at her in her "sober majesty." The fundamental structures of Coatlicue come from a simple yet refined geometry. Observed from the front as a totality it has the form of a cross with a broad trunk and short "arms" and a well proportioned head. The basic elements are then placed in perfect symmetry along a vertical axis. The trunk is divided in four zones more or less equal; these correspond to the legs, the skirt of snakes, the thorax and the head. The two arms protrude to the sides of the thorax. These sober and fine proportions provide a feeling of balance and monumentality when

Coatlicue is viewed from the front or back.

Seen from the sides a different structure can be perceived. Here it has the form of a pyramid, of a triangle. All the forms are subordinated to the hypotenuse of the triangle. What Fernandez considers genial is the manner in which the unknown artist combines these two shapes in a harmonious complex. Symbolically these two shapes stand for the static, the stable, and for the dynamic. The sculptor, says Fernandez, succeeded in expressing a world of dynamic forms yet bordered by great fundamental immovable structures. The intellect here captures what the religious also expresses, a world of chaotic and mysterious forces which ends up being ordered and clear.

The "natural" elements are ordered in the following manner: In the first zone, claws take the place of what should be the feet. The claws are eagle claws; over the claws there are two pairs of eyes looking up. A precious serpent (Precious and common serpents must be distinguished for they symbolize something different. Precious serpents are feathered.) in the center between the claws coming from under the skirt showing her fangs. The legs are covered by feathers; in the posterior part the claws only have one nail and the head of a snake or a turtle peeks from under the covering of feathers.

In the second zone one finds the skirt of common

serpents. The skirt is held by a belt made up of two precious serpents whose heads hang in the front. This belt is tilted forward and down and is partially covered in the front by the skull of the necklace. This skull covers the place where the navel is. In the back, another skull is attached to the belt and from under it, a group of thirteen braids form a covering for the buttocks. The skulls have eyes in the sockets which suggest their being in an intermediate state between death and life.

In the third zone we see in the front the sunken breasts covered partially by the necklace of hands and hearts, eight hands and six hearts. The arms hanging to the sides of the body are covered in the shoulders and elbows by eyes and fangs and the fists are ended by arm bands. On the bands are heads of precious serpents.

Finally, in the fourth zone two heads of serpents meet so that their open mouths resemble human eyes and in general a distorted but distinguishable human face.

Almost all the elements of the basic structure of Coatlicue contain the symbolic numbers. Two claws, two skulls, four zones, four hands and four hearts in the front, thirteen braids, etc. Fernandez refers now to the religious elements present in Coatlicue. The form of cross, that is the four directions, finds its origin in the Aztec cosmogony. Number two (Ome) is part of the primordial God

Ometeotl, and also of the primordial pair Omecihuatl and Ometecuhtli. Four times had the world been created and so on. The form of pyramid recalls the form of all the other religious centers in the Aztec world, a form which perhaps finds its origin in the concept of thirteen successive heavens one on top of the other topped on the vortex by the metaphysical Omeyocan.

The reference to the human body indicates a relation between human life and the cosmic myth, between life and the cosmic order. All the Aztec sculptures are expressions of this very same theme and in Coatlicue especially, one detects that she seems to be in a trance between life and death.

The eagle claws are always found in the representations of Huitzilopochtli and Tonatiuh, the sun god. The eyes may be references to the monster of the earth. The serpent between the claws could be another representation of the earth in this case in its masculine, phallic form as fecundant. Sun and earth meet in the first zone giving direction, verticality, orientation.

The turtle in the back is usually associated with Ayopechtli ycuic, goddess of parturition and means that Coatlicue is also conceived as life producing.

The eagle feathers which cover the legs are symbol of the warlike nature of Coatlicue; all over the first zone

one finds the myth of the struggle between sun and earth. On the base of Coatlicue the symbol of the god of death is engraved suggesting that a transformation occurs when the sun is swallowed up by the earth.

Fernandez suggests that the skirt of common snakes supported by the belt of precious snakes may symbolize people, the human children of Coatlicue who is not only mother of gods, but also Tonantzin, "our mother." The precious snakes of the belt may symbolize the dual pair, originators of the human race. The belt divides the statue in two just like the two principles divided the heaven and the earth in the cosmic myth.

The skull is in the level of the gods, in the upper part of the statue, and because it still has eyes it can be said that it is in a state of living death or of dying life. The thirteen braids in the back may symbolize the thirteen heavens, these braids are divided in two; seven in the lower part and six in the upper and may refer to the two realms of the eternal enemies, Tezcatlipoca and Huitzilopochtli, Lords of night and day respectively. Here the two seem to be united however.

The upper part is the realm of the gods; the sunken breasts suggest to some that this is mother earth who is exhausted from feeding her children. Fernandez disagrees with this interpretation and calls attention to the way in

which the skin seems to be cut at the level of the clavicles since the goddess is beheaded. From under the skin another structure protrudes suggesting then that the goddess is only covered with a human skin. (This interpretation will seem ever more correct later on when human sacrifice is discussed.) This characteristic relates Coatlicue to the goddess Xipe, the one who is symbolically invested with human skins.

The necklace of hearts and hands suggest the sacrificial activity, performed with the hands on the hearts of the victims. The living skull as was suggested before symbolizes that realm where neither life nor death rule absolutely.

The arms of Coatlicue are covered with eyes and mouths; these again suggest that everpresent ambiguity, sun and earth, the extremes, the poles. Also the monster that created the earth had eyes and mouths in the joints.

Under the bands there are "bolsas de copal" bags of copal used in rites to the gods, symbols of praise and worship always found in the god Quetzalcoatl, the god of the spring, of the morning. So the whole thorax is also faithful to the dynamic feeling of the total statue, morning and spring on the one side, death, war, and sacrifice on the other.

The snakes on top of the thorax are again symbols

of the dual principle, thus they are alike. So one finds Coatlicue the supreme projection of the Aztec Weltanschauung, the mother of gods and men, giver and taker of life, woman in the abstract, mother and wife, love and hate, peace and strife.¹⁵ Aramoni says of Coatlicue:

Probably she had her own temple, she deserved it. She was accepted. Coatlicue the great is for the Aztec culture what Venus of Milo was for the Greeks, the Coliseum for the Romans, the frescos in the Sistine Chapel for the Italians during the Renaissance, the Eiffel Tower for the French in the Twentieth Century, and the murals of Orozco and Rivera for the Mexicans today.¹⁶

Coatlicue is the virgin mother of the most important of the Aztec gods, Huitzilopochtli, and so has a lot in common with the Virgin of Guadalupe, who in the centuries to follow would take her place in the Christian pyramids.

III. COATLICUE AND GUADALUPE: CHRISTIAN SYNCRETISM

When the plunder by the Spanish was over and the Conquest had been achieved, the Aztecs who had been used to a pattern of henotheistic wars accepted the imposition of Christianity in the same manner in which the peoples

¹⁵ Justino Fernandez, *Coatlicue* (Mexico: Imprenta Universitario, 1954), 203-267.

¹⁶ Aramoni, *op. cit.*, 39.

that they had conquered had accepted Aztec religion. This was the way of syncretism. The gods of the white Spaniards had proven to be better but not totally different. There was a cross, a symbol known to the Aztec for a long time. The Spaniards had a Son God who although a pacifist yet entered the land of Anahuac behind the swords of the Conquistadors. Furthermore, there was a Mother, she had also given birth to her son in a miraculous manner. She was also mother of God and also Tonantzin, "Our Mother." The new religion also perpetuated the male superiority through the myths of the creation of man and the entrance of evil on the earth.

Only ten years had elapsed after the conquest when Tonantzin, Our Mother, was begging for return to the celestial throne of the Nahuatl Christian Universe. The legend tells that in the Hill of Tepeyac, where the ancient goddess Tonantzin (one of the aspects of Coatlicue) used to be venerated, a Lady appeared; she called herself the Mother of God and wanted a Shrine where her children could come and worship her. Juan Diego, the man to whom Tonantzin had appeared went to the religious authorities of the day and asked for the shrine. The bishop, Zumarraga, skeptically asked for a proof. Roses in winter from the barren hill and the effigy of the Indian Virgin miraculously imprinted in the Indian's ayate (a poncho-like piece of

clothing) were more than enough to satisfy the incredulous. Santa Maria Tonantzin de Guadalupe began her sovereign reign.

During the years of the fight for Independence from Spain she led the fight against the Spaniards and the foreign Virgin de la Soledad. The history of the movement of Independence records several instances when the Virgin's effigy was executed. All in vain, she lead her children to the final victory which cemented her already undisputed position.

Some may say that only the positive characters of the Feminine are present in Guadalupe, however, there is enough evidence to demonstrate that both elements are there. One just has to go to the Shrine of Guadalupe and see the testimonies given by the people who year after year crowd the Shrine. There are many instances when the Virgin punished unbelief. The long pilgrimages on foot, the penances which the Virgin "demands," (usually these are self imposed, but the people interpret them as commands, "Mandas," of the Virgin) the bloody knees, the number of people fainting because of the long fasts tell about the projection of negative attributes. Why else should the Virgin be appeased or bought?

Coatlicue has not left the scene, her ubiquitousness is felt, her amorphous characteristics have taken

Christian garbs, but under the Indian face of Santa Maria Tonantzin of Guadalupe the forms of Coatlicue can be from time to time perceived. She is stepping on the moon and surrounded by the stars and ruling over a people who, unable to respect women objectively in their own wives and mothers, must find an abstract mother, feared and praised, sublime projection of an unresolved tension.

As stated before, the causes of aggression are manifold and complex, but in the Mexican culture, a more careful and conscientious study of the historical roots is urgently needed. A self evaluation is many times painful and yet extremely necessary. This chapter has been dealing with such self evaluation of the more "ancient" past of Mexico and has related it specifically to the worship of the Virgin of Guadalupe. It is now necessary to proceed with this self evaluation about more recent historical and sociological events.

CHAPTER V

FROM AZTEC WARRIOR TO MACHO

The last chapter explored the way in which the archetype of the Feminine was perceived in the earlier eras of the history of Mexico. It now becomes necessary to see the way in which the Feminine and some of the causes of aggression as mentioned in Chapter II have functioned in more recent history and in contemporary Mexico.

Whenever possible, one-to-one relations to the theories of aggression expounded before will be pointed out, but in general, this whole chapter is an attempt to explore the way in which those theories may find support in the specific cultural modes of Mexico.

A characteriological profile of the Mexican and his environment will be presented with special emphasis on those characteristics of his upbringing, education, and social life, which more directly influence his aggressive behavior.

I. TRAITOR AND MOTHER

The arrival of the Spanish Conquistadors in Mexico

and the subsequent defeat of the Aztec nation compounded more than ever the problem for the men and women in Mexico. The male ego already weak and frightened because of the unresolved conflict which existed from primordial eras was now suffering a defeat which would lower more than ever his self-esteem. The women could look fearfully ahead to years of more accentuated scorn, ill treatment, and dehumanization. The Spanish conquerors proved to be no better men than the proud Aztecs. Their Mediterranean exposure, their Christian gods and the centuries of Moslem domination that they had endured had not equipped them to deal openly and constructively with women, especially with the women of the vanquished.

To compound even more the unresolved man-woman tension, the conquest of Anahuac, the land of the Aztec, was made easier thanks to the cooperation which a woman, Malintzi, gave to the Conquistadors.

It was mentioned earlier that Cortez had found that among some of the coastal peoples women still played an important role.¹ From among those people he took for a mistress a woman who was a frustrated heiress to the throne of one of the coastal provinces. This woman was highly respected, spoke several languages and according to the

¹ *vide supra*, 57.

records was beautiful too. Malintzi (the Spanish form of the name today is Malinche) became the first Christian and also the mother of the first mestizo. In a very real way she is the mother of the new mixed breed which eventually would inhabit the land of the Aztecs. The bastard beginnings of the new nation would add more fuel to the already existent inferiority complex.

But Malinche, now baptized and Spanized as Dona Marina, is not only the mother, she is also the traitor. It was her invaluable help which allowed the smaller Spanish forces to conquer and plunder the whole land. She was able to help Cortez make treaties with the smaller vassal nations which the Aztecs had dominated. She also warned Cortez that an ambush had been set up for him in Cholula. In one word, she was a determinant force in the Conquest of Mexico.

The Aztec had always "known" that "women are not to be trusted"; he had always feared the return of the matriarchate and now it finally had happened. A woman had come back to haunt the proud Aztec by first seducing the Spanish and then using him as an instrument of revenge. This the Aztec "knew"; this today's Mexicans also know.

La Malinche, the "Mexican Eve," as Orozco muralized her and Octavio Paz literalized her, is the historical link between Coatlicue and the modern Mexican; in the same manner that the Virgin of Guadalupe is the religious link, she

Machismo and Angst. Machismo is also a reaction against that which in an earlier chapter was labeled "existential anxiety." All through the culture one observes an apparent disdain for death, a "whistling in the dark" which one sees in children who play with toys shaped like skeletons. It becomes obvious around November first and second during the festivities of All Saints and the Faithful Dead. Men and women eat "pan de muerto," the bread of the dead, and "calaveras," skulls made out of sugar candy, usually with one's own name inscribed on the forehead, all indices of the indifference with which the Mexican views life or the strength with which he affirms the significance of human existence.

It was pointed out earlier that the existential insecurity had found expression in the ancient past of Mexico and had also been reinforced by the Iberian "tragic sense of life."²⁵ The mixture of these is seen by Octavio Paz as solitude, the condition of knowing that one is alone, alone in the whole universe unable to reconcile himself to the flux of life.

Paz sounds Sartrean in one of the passages where he describes the Mexican.

²⁵*vide supra*, 33-34.

she too is a symbol of ambivalence, mother and traitor, apocalypse and genesis.

A raped nation can easily become the breeding ground for ruthless violence, especially when the conditions for violence are already firmly rooted in the culture. And the savage fury which was unleashed later against the colonial rulers in the Nineteenth Century, and again against the dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz, the rich "criollo," was the product of pent up unresolved conflicts, conflicts which unfortunately even to this day have not been resolved.

Initially, the conquered Aztec made his raped wife and his bastard step-children the butt of his pent up aggression against the conqueror. His manliness had to be proven, but it could only be proven by attacking the weaker or by exploiting them sexually.

II. FROM JOSEFA, THE INFORMER TO ADELITA, LA SOLDADERA

The movement of independence began mainly among criollos (Spanish born in Mexico) who then used the aggressiveness of the Mestizo and Indian classes that they had patronized. The criollos had the ideology of violence, the Indians only needed an excuse for revolution. The great leaders in the movement are men with the blood, cul-

ture, and religion of Spain: Hidalgo, a priest, Iturbide, a general in the Royalist Army, Galeana, son of a prominent Spanish Government leader. On the other hand, the masses are made of anonymous Indians, children of the Encomiendas, semi-feudal systems which enslaved the natives and made the Spanish rich.

Josefa Ortiz de Dominguez was the significant female figure in the movement of independence. She was the wife of the "Corregidor" who was sort of a Mayor of Queretaro and discovered that the Royalist forces knew about the underground movement leading towards independence. Foreseeing the danger of waiting too long, she decided that the war for independence had to start right then and there. She sent a message to Father Hidalgo in Dolores, knowing that the people would follow the priest they trusted. Her information gave the Mexican Army the advantage of the surprise attack, and she entered the gates of history with ease. Father Hidalgo was eventually captured and executed in 1811. He was the idealist in the group who never lived to see that the movement he had started to try to benefit the Indians and Mestizos would only pay great dividends to the transplanted Spanish who severed the ties with Spain totally in 1826 and proceeded to return the masses that had helped them to defeat the Royalist to "their place." The Indians end up where they

had started, passing from servitude to the Spanish of the Continent to servitude to the Spanish of the New Spain, Mexico.

In the 1860's, a Mexican Indian finally made it to the presidency of the Republic; Juarez, the Zapotecan, proceeded to clean up the government and to reform the Constitution, but the all-Spanish ecclesiastical hierarchy aligned with the Spanish aristocracy and asked France to establish a puppet government in Mexico. The French moved in, Juarez was exiled, and the Indians once more went back to "their place" at the bottom.

Profirio Diaz, the general who had distinguished himself in the campaign against the French armies took over the reins of the government soon after Juarez's return and the expulsion and execution of the French royalty and of members of the Mexican Royalist Party. The popular Diaz soon forgot the masses that had brought him to power and established a military dictatorship that benefited only the close friends and relatives who were the recipients of his nepotism.

The cups of violence once more ran over. In an almost spontaneous manner, under the guidance of a genuinely autochthonous leadership, with an almost appalling lack of unifying ideology, the revolution of 1910 started first with the killing of the Cerdan family in Puebla and

then with the explosive spontaneity of Zapata in the South, Villa in the North, and Madero Carranza in Central Mexico.

It was at this time that the Mexican woman appeared once more on the scene, but not under a proper name like her Spanish counterpart, but as an ubiquitous rebozo (Mexican shawl) covered companion of the men in the front lines. Her presence has been immortalized in the murals of Orozco and Rivera and labeled merely "La Soldadera," the female soldier. Her brave and courageous deeds have been handed down through the folk tales and that almost *sine qua non* of Mexico, the Corrido. Adelita and Valentina are generic, rather than proper names for each and every one of the women who joined the masses of the men of the Revolution.

Why the soldadera? What was her role in the revolutionary struggle of the beginning of this Century? Her role must not be confused with that of the Army Nurse or the WAC or the WAVE. The soldadera only had her naked self to offer, that and the incentive for more violence. She cooked, made tortillas, and gave man sexual comfort, but she was also an anchor; she was sometimes in the way and was an element of inefficiency.

Aramoni argues that the presence of women in battle, that is the type of presence that is reported in the annals of the revolution of Mexico, is a unique phenomenon, since these women are not in any technical sense "women soldiers"

and he believes that there is something inherent in the Mexican psychodynamics which allows this kind of phenomenon. The tacit acceptance by women of men's superiority and the male's self-image as one who must be obeyed and who must display his courage unite to produce what was witnessed in the Revolution of 1910.

It was not because of concern for the wife that the man dragged his wife to the battle front, nor was it the love of the wife which made her follow her man, but his need and her fear which combined to create *la soldadera*.

Agustin Yanez, in his *Al Filo del Agua (The Edge of the Storm)*, a novel about the events immediately preceding the beginnings of the Revolution, explores some of the factors that might have led some women to join the forces of the revolution (regardless of sides or ideologies) and suggests that in many instances, the revolution was seen by the women as a means to obtain freedom, dignity, and humanization.² Unfortunately, the opposite occurred, as many women ended up being used evermore as objects, and treated as subhumans. Women soon found out that the return road to dignity and self-respect was not going to be through the path of violence.

²Agustin Yanez, *Al Filo del Agua* (Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, 1947).

III. TOWNS OF MOURNING WOMEN

In describing a village in the state of Jalisco, Agustin Yanez characterizes it as a town of women in mourning, as a village of perennial Lent.³ The time and the state may change, but the description fits the mood of a great majority of villages in Central Mexico very well.

Modernization, better communications, and above all, education are beginning to bring changes to many of the towns, but they are only beginning. The changes are almost imperceptible, and the customs of the people remain basically unaltered.

Villages of narrow busy streets where people politely greet each other. Towns full of monotony and tranquility whose pace of life is infrequently broken by an almost simulated happiness in the days of fiesta and pageantry. Towns of mourning women.

Foreign visitors notice what seems to be the absence of women in the twenty to forth age bracket. Most women seem very young or past their forties. Part of the reason for this apparent absence is that one avenue to fulfillment and dignity is that of age, even if pretended

³*Ibid.*, 3-14.

advanced age. Unable to receive dignity for the sheer fact of being women and frustrated in the path of violence, women have accepted the virtues of forbearance, piety, and suffering as a means to attain dignity. The more they resemble the mother who has given all and taken nothing, the more flaccid and non-sensuous the tired breasts, the greyer the hair, the older the appearance the higher the respect, and ironically the greater the anxiety and ambivalence on the part of the male.

In his earlier ventures in Mexico, Oscar Lewis made a study which became a landmark in the study of life in Mexican villages; later on he was able to re-study the village and produce a genuine gem in the study of the psychodynamics of village life in Mexico. He was encouraged to do this by Robert Redfield who had originally studied Tepoztlan. *Life in a Mexican Village*, the book Lewis produced after his re-study of Tepoztlan stands today as a true landmark of anthropological and psychological research. Many of his findings support the perceptions mentioned in this work and his conclusions bear out the fact that life in Mexico is basically viewed as a struggle, with the man-woman anxiety very much at the core of the problems in inter-personal relations. "What anxiety there is, stems from fear of a hostile environment and from the

quality of inter-personal relations."⁴

One of the factors that is very much a part of the fear and suspicion present in village life, is the "gap" between the ideal cultural patterns and the reality of daily life. It was mentioned earlier that a social or political patriarchy is usually counteracted by a psychological matriarchy⁵ and this certainly is the case in villages and cities in Mexico.

According to the ideal culture patterns for husband-wife relations in Tepoztlan, the husband is an authoritarian, patriarchal figure who is head and master of the household and enjoys the highest status in the family. His prerogatives are to receive the obedience and respect of his wife and children, as well as their services. . . . A wife should be industrious and frugal and should manage to save money no matter how small her husband's income. A good wife is not critical, curious, or jealous of her husband's activities outside the home.

The ideal patterns for the expected roles of husbands and wives are, in large measure, a social fiction. Although in most homes there is an outward compliance to the ideal pattern, with the wife apparently submissive and serving, there are actually few homes in which the husband is the dominant figure he seeks to be, or in which he truly controls his family.⁶

The reaction of the male is basically not different from that of his Aztec ancestor. Violence becomes the weapon he must use to try to close the gap.

⁴Oscar Lewis, *Life in a Mexican Village* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1951), 302.

⁵*vide supra*, 50.

⁶Lewis, *op. cit.*, 319.

In many homes, the husband's sense of security depends upon the extent to which his wife and children fear him. Some men are more violent than others and beat their wives at slight provocation. Suspicion of adultery is one of the major causes of beatings, but a wife may receive a beating for lesser offenses, such as not having a good meal ready, failure to have clean and well-ironed clothes for her husband, or selling too much corn without permission. A jealous wife, or one who questions her husband's activities or judgement, may also receive a beating. Wives are supposed to take their beatings without fighting back.⁷

The quality of husband-wife relations is really not one of love but of fear. The woman fears the physical brute force of the man, and the man lives in constant fear and suspicion. He is afraid that since women are evil his wife is going to take revenge by resorting to sorcery. Many a chronic sickness in men is attributed to a black magic type of revenge. Also when a man acts submissive or even treats his wife with deference and love, he is believed to be under her spell--literally--because she most surely fed him "*toloache*," an herb that, according to man talk, has the power of rendering a man unable to face up to his wife.

One of Lewis' informants, a widower, told him:

"I used to say to my wife, 'I rule in my home. If you butt into my business I will kill you.' I didn't weaken, so she never ruled. Sometimes I feared she might give me some of this stuff but, thank God, she never did."⁸

⁷*Ibid.*, 322.

⁸*Ibid.*, 325.

The Rorschach tests administered to the villagers of Tepoztlan brought forth extremely helpful evidence which once more backs up the basic assertions of this dissertation. The results of these tests will be presented under a different heading later on.

Oliver La Farge, in a study of another village noticed that the villagers were:

. . . rather rough with each other and overbearing when in power, and their hospitality is distinctly restrained, save towards their friends. . . . They are a quiet people, although easily amused, and under their surface quietness goes on an intense, internal, repressed life which is indescribable. . . .

Their external life is drab, their lot is hard, they are a conquered people, and occasional bouts of drunkenness do them good.⁹

"Their external life is drab," towns of "perennial Lent," a life of perennial masks, of fearful and manipulated men, of women in mourning, and of bells tolling for all.

IV. EL MACHO: MAN OR MASK?

The bells indeed toll; they toll daily in a land of defensive aggression, where the most innocent insinuation may be the genesis of a tragedy, in a place which in 1960 ranked as the number one in homicides per 100,000

⁹ Oliver La Farge, *Santa Eulalia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947), 6-7.

of the population, 50. (The United States ranked second then with 8.50 per 100,000. A more recent poll showed the United States leading among the more advanced nations; however, Mexico was not included in that survey.)

Why this high index? The reasons are manifold and complex and, as has been presented in this paper, firmly rooted in the ancient past of Mexico and buried in the collective unconscious. Mexico is a land of men, tierra de hombres, and of men who are "muy machos." The machismo in Mexico permeates the whole atmosphere. It is as omnipresent as the amorphous Coatlicue. Many have written about this phenomenon, it is in the songs and in the aggressive obscene language, it manifests itself as bravery or as Don Juanismo, as aggressive abuse or as subtle seduction. It floats as a cloud or it bursts like a rocket. It is the paramount expression of the Mexican's inability to deal effectively and honestly with others and with his own true self. It is a mask of bravery to hide the hyper-anxious and paradoxical male.

Macho literally translated means "male." It is a word derived from the Latin word "masculus" from which the English word masculine is also derived. The word "machismo" does not exist in the dictionary and the word macho denotes animality, sexuality. Animals are referred to as machos or hembras, males or females. But when the word is used for

a man,

. . . it expresses genitality. . . . It refers to a function related to the medular genitality, to a peculiar type of bravery, to a special type of solving human controversies and expresses a special attitude towards woman, life and death . . . [a Macho] must be able to dominate women, be aggressive, capable of showing superiority fighting openly with muscle, knife or pistol. He does not tolerate that his manliness be questioned, he must be daring, ignoring obvious dangers, affirming himself in this manner almost always in trivial circumstances. This attitude has exaggerated overtones of paranoic origin. . . . Insecure, he is afraid of being discovered as inferior and fights permanently against that feeling. . . . In the Macho there is a deeply rooted doubt of his own manliness, before woman as well as before another man.¹⁰

The Machismo in Mexico is in many ways a reaction against the Feminine, it is a continuous perpetuation of the male superiority of man over woman by displaying violent behavior as well as by forceful rape. It is a Weltanschauung which in subtle manners has been inscribed even into legal documents.

In Mexico, the law requires that all marriages be performed by a Justice of the Peace in order to be legal. The government does not recognize the religious ceremony as a "legal contract." The Justice of the Peace is required by law to read the "Epistle of Melchor Ocampo" to the married couple; in it is written:

¹⁰ Aniceto Aramoni, *Psicoanálisis de la Dinámica de un Pueblo* (Mexico: B. Costa-Amic, 1967), 275-277.

Those who are married should be and must be sacred for one another even more than one is sacred unto his own self. Man whose sexual endowments are those of courage and strength, should give and must give to the woman, protection, food, and guidance treating her always as the most delicate and sensitive part of his own being, and with the magnanimity and generous benevolence which the strong owes to the weak, especially when the weak surrenders to him and when society has entrusted her to him. The woman whose principal endowments are abnegation, beauty, compassion, foresight, and tenderness should give and must give obedience to the husband treating him always with the veneration which one owes to the person who supports and defends us, and with the special care of one who does not want to sting the rough, irritable, and hard part of one's self, of one's own character.¹¹

There are airs of "equality" in the letter but it is openly patriarchal and intended to perpetuate a situation which is outwardly benefitting only the male members of the culture. The virtues in the woman of "abnegation and compassion" come in handy for the man to use as tools against his wife.

The religious ceremony unfortunately is no better. The Pauline recommendations to the wives interpreted by the Mexican mentality add up to inequality with the woman in the low end of the totem pole.

The recommendations read from the Epistles are soon forgotten by the man. *The Children of Sanchez*, a book which opened the sub-culture of poverty in Mexico to a major exposure and to closer scrutiny, reveals many instances of mistreatment of the wife by the male.

¹¹*Epistle of Melchor Ocampo*, read in the Civil Ceremonies in Mexico.

Manuel, one of the children of Sanchez, has been carrying on with another woman behind his wife's back. Eventually his guilt and anxiety combine and he gives his wife a terrible beating.

It got to a point where I was hoping my wife would give me an excuse to leave her. I was short-tempered with her; once I beat her hard, very hard. You see, I was used to absolute obedience on her part, not forcing her with blows, but on the basis of yelling at her. Alberto had come to see me one morning, and I asked Shorty for something. I forget what. She was in the kitchen and she shouted back, "I'm busy right now! Stop bothering me."

She had never talked back to me before. "Here is Alberto and look at the way you answer me! Will you give it to me or must I make you give it to me?"

"No, man!" she said. "You just give orders around here! How are you going to make me? Get it yourself." I got up, not very angry yet, saying, "I'm telling you ...Shorty..." and *pum!* she gave me a slap. Right in front of Alberto!

I don't know, I was so angry that I went blind. I felt a red band over my eyes. I was so ashamed in the presence of my friend that I went after her and really beat her up. Later, Alberto said, "What a brute you are! Brother, how strong you are when you're angry!" because with one blow, I made her fly, just as though she were a doll. He tried to stop me, but couldn't. Her mother was there too, washing clothes. She didn't interfere at first, but when she saw me kicking Paula, she said, "Don't kick her, can't you see she's pregnant again?"¹²

This is a perfect example of machismo at work. Manuel, used to blind obedience on the part of his wife, his shame in the presence of his friend, and his brutality even towards his pregnant wife. This kind of behavior is

¹²Oscar Lewis, *The Children of Sanchez* (New York: Knopf, 1961), 179.

not atypical by any means among the Mexican poor. It shows itself also in fights among men and in the language that they use against each other.

Verbal attacks. The term mother is present in most of the slang expressions both of praise and of derogation. When a thing is beautiful and valuable, one says it is "a toda madre." Literally, it is "full mother." If an object is invaluable then, "vale madre," it is worth a mother. Beating someone up is "desmadrarlo" or "darle en la madre," hit him in the mother and when one does not care, then one doesn't give a mother, "me importa madre."

Carrion has studied "el importamadrismo" (the attitude of attributing to the term mother negative or derogatory values) and concludes that what the Mexican does is affirming through negation that the most important thing in the world for him is his mother.¹³

The only security the Mexican finds, he finds through the imitation of the male figures, "manly, courageous." He must deny any weakness which may identify him with the feminine. From his childhood, he never "cracks," nunca se raja. To "crack" means to be open, vulnerable. Only women are "cracked," (physiologically that is, her

¹³Jose Carrion, *Mito y Magia del Mexicano* (Mexico: Porrúa y Obregon, 1952).

vagina is a "crack" which leaves her open to the outside world) it is because of this that they are inferior.

There is still another verbal attack which clearly illustrates the ambivalent attitude toward the mother, toward the feminine. "La mentada de madre," is literally "the mentioning of one's mother." This no Mexican tolerates (yet every Mexican hurts other people's mother--and indirectly his own?--with the same obscene phrase.) "Hijo de la chingada" and "chinga a tu madre" are much stronger than the Anglo "son of a bitch" or "mother fucker." A whore gives herself intentionally, la chingada is deceived before she is opened and possessed. Octavio Paz has provided a tremendous analysis of this word in his *Labyrinth of Solitude*:

Who is la "Chingada?" First of all is the Mother. Not a mother of flesh and bones, but a mythical figure. The "Chingada" is one of the Mexican representations of Motherhood such as La Llorona (The Crying Woman) or the "abnegated Mexican mother" which we honor on the 10th of May. The "Chingada" is the mother who has suffered metaphorically or really, the infamous and corrosive action implicit in the verb from which her name is taken. . . . In Mexico the meanings [of the verb chingar] are innumerable. It is a magic word. A change of intonation, a different inflexion suffice to change its meaning. There are as many overtones as intonations. . . . But the many meanings retain the idea of aggression . . . the verb denotes violence, to leave one's self and penetrate forcefully in another person, [the sexual overtones are obvious.] The idea of tearing, of breaking in reappears in almost all the expressions. The word is dyed with sexuality, but is not synonymous with the sexual act; a woman can be "chingada" without being possessed. When the sexual act is meant by the word then it has the overtones of

rape and deceit. The one who "chinga" does so without the "chingada's" consent. In summary, "chingar" is to do violence to others. It is a masculine verb, active and cruel: stings, wounds, hurts and stains. It produces a bitter and resentful satisfaction in the user of the verb. When we shout it, we break a veil of silence, modesty, or hypocrisy. We reveal ourselves as we really are.¹⁴

Coatlicue reappears through and through. The Mexican's inability to deal with her pushes him to attack her, to deny her, to prove himself to her by "chingar."

The "Romantic Macho." Another way in which machismo erupts is in the Don Juan attitude that many Mexicans take, the "Latin Lover" who counts his conquests in the same manner in which a cowboy in a Western movie carves notches in his Colt 45 or in the way in which the Indian collects scalps. It is the belief that a man can sexually subdue any and all women. It is one of the most hurtful expressions of machismo and yet one of the most accepted by men and women with only a few exceptions.

In *The Children of Sanchez*, Consuelo, who is the only one in the family with the desire to climb out of poverty, becomes a victim of this type of machismo. Under the guise of taking her to a movie location, a movie producer rapes her and gets her pregnant. Earlier she had

¹⁴Octavio Paz, *El Laberinto de la Soledad* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Economica, 1959), 68-71.

stated that:

The *macho* Mexican, in his pride and vanity, considered [considers] women inferior and enjoyed [enjoys] humiliating them. Only *he* is right and only *his* feelings count. In a discussion, he is not interested in learning the truth, but only in outtalking the others. If a man in a Nash is overtaken by a Chrysler, he will speed to pass it, to show that he is superior, after all. A woman cannot walk alone, without some virile man asserting his "rights" over her. All the men I knew, my father, my brothers, my *novios* and my fellow employees, believed it was their place to give the orders and to be obeyed.

I could never get along with a dominating, imperious man. I didn't like crushing authority, I didn't want to feel inferior. I even fought my father on that score. A thing was not right just because he said it! Men were stronger physically (but not morally), and behind all their "superiority" was force! That was why I had no confidence in Latin men and could never, never, get along with them. I wanted to be independent, to make my own way, to find the right environment.¹⁵

After the rape incident and an illegal abortion, she bitterly reiterates.

Thus, to my sorrow, was my first, bitter encounter with that infamous, cursed Mexican *machismo*. I, like an infinite number of other Mexican women, was part of that cruel game, in which the domineering male wins. "Shall I knock you down or let you free?" There is nothing generous, noble or worthy in it, for there is a price to being let free. It is a barbarous act of egotism and advantage, adorned with persuasive words.¹⁶

V. PSYCHODYNAMICS OF MACHISMO

It has been the central thesis of this work that

¹⁵Lewis, *The Children of Sanchez*, 431.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 440.

the Archetype of the Feminine lies at the bottom of the causes of aggression. The unresolved man-woman tension, the inability of man to deal openly with women, the perpetuation of a matriarchal dependent type of religion and the hyper-aggression exhibited are all symptomatic of the inner tension with the Feminine. This must always be in the background of the present discussion.

The Rorschach Test evidence. Oscar Lewis incorporated in his *Life in a Mexican Village* a chapter written by Theodora M. Abel and Renata A. Calabresi in which the results of Rorschach tests conducted in *Tepotzlan* are reported. One major conclusion which sheds some light on the problem of violence is the evidence for the fact that custom and protocol rather than love seem to be the motivating forces in human relations in general and also in parent-children relationships. "We hypothecate that they (children ages 5-8) are being accepted in a matter of fact and detached manner."¹⁷

As children grow matters do not change much for them. In the nine to twelve age bracket it is estimated again that a neutral, rather than a warm atmosphere is the one that prevails.

¹⁷Lewis, *Life in a Mexican Village*, 317.

We suggest that both boys and girls are being driven in some ways and have not been reared in a warm and accepting atmosphere, but rather in a neutral one emotionally. We can see from the records of these children and the adults that their attitudes toward each other are not those of friendliness, but rather of duty and getting things done . . . The prepubertal boys in general, have the same pattern in the Rorschach as do the girls, having a controlled and efficient way of life without showing warmth or getting close to people.¹⁸

Responses from males and females do not show much variation until adolescence when the girls become more rigid than ever before or after. On the other hand, boys exhibit more freedom and spontaneity, but anxiety about sexual needs and satisfactions is very evident.

The young adults, twenty to thirty-nine age bracket, show still further differentiation, the women are less tense than the adolescents but are still cold and detached.

She has learned to be the kind of person she is expected to be, a controlled and efficient individual who takes care of the material needs of everyday living, and who does not express emotional needs nor give out any love and affection. It is suggested that she has somehow learned to get more satisfaction from activities and enterprises related to the daily routine rather than from her sexual activity. To the woman of Tepotzlan sex is not to be enjoyed or cultivated but to be suppressed or considered a duty.¹⁹

At the same time the men reach their peak of security in society and in their sexual role. They basically are expected by society to run the show, and they do it

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 316-317.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 317.

effectively. However, there are signs in these men that point to the "impulsive, undisciplined behavior that is the characteristic pattern of the older males. But nevertheless these young adults are able to handle their impulses and anxieties."²⁰

From age forty on the strange reversals that were mentioned earlier occur. It appears to the test interpreters that the rigidity of the woman's upbringing becomes transformed into genuine strength.

. . . it would appear that she realizes she can control and manipulate the world about her. She is undisturbed by day dreams, sexual urges, and emotional needs. The older woman has somehow discovered that she can now run the show and does so.²¹

The men on the other hand become anxious, impulsive, and conflicted. It is easy to see that at this stage when maturation should have led to identity integration and generativity, the exact opposite has happened. The adult males' identities are diffuse, vague, and unable to lead men to age with dignity.

In conclusion we may say that the outstanding feature of the Rorschach test in Tepoztlan is the indication of the opposite course taken by the life cycle of the man and women. Women appear to be initiated early in their role in life, and are consistently expected to avoid sex as a source of pleasure. They follow a well defined line of development, with conscious control over their feelings and impulses, but in later

²⁰*Ibid.*

²¹*Ibid.*, 318.

years they assume the dominant role in society. Men experience more discontinuity and inconsistency in behavior; they are likely to be more exuberant than women but also more anxious and insecure. As they grow older they lose their dominant position, and the older adults appear disturbed, impulsive, and anxious. They seem to be losing the grip on society that the older women are taking over.²²

While these conclusions come out specifically from the experience in Tepoztlan, they are generally true across the board. While no Rorschach evidence is available for a cross section of the Mexican society, social cultural patterns point exactly in the same direction that the Rorschach tests delineated.

Other cultural variables. There are cultural patterns which reinforce and perpetuate the psychic condition already mentioned, however, no single variable by itself could possibly account for a situation which could technically be labeled "the syndrome of machismo."

The Mexican child is soon imprinted with patterns and attitudes which determine his or her place in society. Boys are received with joy while there is almost mourning when a girl is born. Most Mexican mothers pamper boys and almost ignore girls. It is through their male children that the Mexican mothers will eventually attain dignity. Lactation periods are relatively long and almost traumati-

²²*Ibid.*

cally interrupted by the next pregnancy. The Mexican infant soon sees himself in a world of struggle, in a culture of poverty one must struggle for bread, for the best place to sleep in, for the caresses and love of the parents. The pattern of struggle and violence gets established rather early in life and modified by a collective unconscious which has been "influenced" by the Feminine and a raped national image.

The school years go by painfully and slowly, most of the children of poverty being ill fed and living in crowded conditions do not do well in school. Their egos suffer blows which leave indelible scars and only through violence and belligerence do they try to regain a measure of self-respect. This of course fails since it leads to punitive action on the part of the teachers, the majority of whom are women, and parents, action which also reinforces the pattern of violence and ambivalence towards women.

As adolescence comes around and the search for identity becomes critical, the models of adulthood tend to be violent. The heroes of history, stoic and brave, may easily be seen as "*machos*" who faced destiny courageously even against the worst possible odds. The living models are almost always models of violence. The almost absent father comes home drunk, beats the wife and children and

gets in fights with half of the tenement. The kids of the street prove to be no better. Brave, foolhardy, foul-mouthed, and sexually bragging they receive the approval of all and seem to be the ones with a higher status.

Movies idealize the *charro* who is an elevated macho, the Mexican version of the hero in the Western movie. This *charro* usually is a good singer, a romantic lover, and an unexcelled fighter. With a gun in one hand and a guitar in the other, he seduces women and kills or maims men.

Mexican sports tend to be channels of sublimation, but also reinforce the pattern of violence. Bullfights are the prime example of this. Every child longs to be a bullfighter at one time or another and face death and prove his manliness. Bullfighters' cards are as popular in Mexico as the traded Baseball or Football cards are in the United States.

Politics and bureaucratic life in Mexico reflect the attitudes of machismo, and also set a poor example for the growing adolescent. It is the sly, powerful, and shrewd who makes it to positions of power. He, like the "romantic macho," dresses his presentation with beautiful language and glowing promises. When everything fails and defeat seems imminent, many a candidate (especially if he is from the ruling P. R. I., Institutional Revolutionary

Party) will resort to force and violence; ballot boxes will be stolen, election returns altered, or, if all else fails, the opposition will be "eliminated."

Police and military brutality, as can be expected, reach exorbitant proportions. Although there is no capital punishment in Mexico, it is generally accepted that many criminals who fail to cooperate are conveniently disposed of by elements in the police force. As for the military, they tend to be more brutal, as recent riots in Mexico City showed.

In business the same holds true, unreasonable profits are made at the expense of the customer, and violations of business practice go unpunished, since bribery is accepted as a way to solve legal hassles. This type of unethical behavior becomes criminal in the worst possible sense. Food inspectors overlook violations and people get poisoned; building inspectors accept "favors" and later on buildings collapse; vehicle inspectors look the other way for a price, and the highway casualties mount. These invisible homicides are committed by people who generally enjoy immunity, but this ought to be considered as yet another index of the low esteem in which Mexicans hold life, another indicator of his violent character.

Roberto, one of the children of Sanchez, summarizes the Mexican style of life as he experiences it.

There is no law here, just fists and money, which is what counts most. It is the law of the jungle, the law of the strongest. The one who is economically strong can just laugh. He commits the worst crimes and is an innocent dove before the judges and the police because he has money to give out. But how differently it goes with a poor man who commits a minor offense!

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Mexico is my country, right? And I have a special, profound love for it . . . But regarding the Mexicans, well, I don't have a good impression of them. I don't know whether it is because I myself have behaved badly, but it seems to me that there is a lack of good will among them.

The law of the strongest operates here. No one helps the ones who fall; on the contrary, if they can injure them more, they will. If one is drowning they push him under. And if one is winning out, they will pull him down. . . . They talk about constitutionalism . . . it is a pretty, resounding word, but I don't even know what it means. For me, we live by violence . . . homicide, theft, assault. We live quickly and must be constantly on guard.²³

Hymns to violence. Mexican "corridos," the folk songs, elevate violence and machismo. A random sample of songs will show this immediately. This one is about Jalisco, a state in Mexico, entitled Jalisco Nunca Pierde, Jalisco Never Loses.

My Jalisco never loses
And when it loses it takes it back
And is not afraid of dangers
It never takes a step back.

It does not matter to find death
By the window of a girl friend
Or to carry in one's conscience
One more guilt for having killed.

²³Lewis, *The Children of Sanchez*, 232-233.

In Los Altos [a province] the machos
 Respect courage
 And the law is that of eyes
 Which enamour with their glance.

For their women's kisses men
 Go unafraid to battle
 In the midst of bloody sarapes
 And of many dagger wounds.

All the elements of machismo are present. Women are elevated in the abstract but also are given "credit" for the courage the men display. A disdain for death and a contempt for killing is indeed a clear paradigm of machismo.

Another folk song is entitled Yo Soy Mexicano,
 I am Mexican.

I am Mexican, and I'm proud of it
 I was born disdaining life and death
 And if I provoke by bragging I will back it up.

My pride is in being a Charro brave and gutsy
 To have my hat embroidered with silver
 Let no one dare say that I am "cracked."²⁴

I ride my horse on bare back
 And above all I'm a great lover
 I am Mexican, I am very daring.

I am Mexican and my fate has determined
 That everywhere I be known
 Because of my bravery.

I am Mexican and trust no one
 And like Cuauhtemoc [last Aztec Emperor] when I'm suffering
 I endure it and laugh and never "crack."

²⁴ cf., 95-96.

I like my hat cocked to one side.
A gun with a handle made of deer bone
And smoke cigaretts of strong tobacco.

I like to fight cocks and know I have fame
But above all to be a great lover
I am Mexican...I am very daring.

What an autobiography of the macho! What a self-image, abounding in indices of an inferiority complex! What a cover up and above all, what a poor model and pattern for the adolescent in search of an identity.

One could easily provide more examples of songs with the same basic theme but the intention is not that of analysing the songs of Mexico but only of showing how they too are an expression of and a contribution to a violent mentality.

Religion does not usually help in providing positive models. Most Mexicans are nominally Roman Catholics and Roman Catholicism in Mexico as was stated before is basically a syncretistic mixture of Christian and Indian lore.

Violence in Mexico then is a phenomenon that one must consider rather unique because of the proportion it reaches and because of the forces that generate it. It is a Weltanschauung deeply imbedded in the collective unconscious, fed by a tragic history and reinforced by cultural patterns.

The Mexican, whether young or old, *criollo* or *mestizo*, general or laborer or lawyer, seems to me to be a person who shuts himself away to protect himself: his face is a mask and so is his smile. In his harsh solitude, which is both barbed and courteous, everything serves him as a defense: silence and words, politeness and disdain, irony and resignation. He is jealous of his own privacy and that of others, and he is afraid even to glance at his neighbor, because a mere glance can trigger the rage of these electrically charged spirits. He passes through life like a man who has been flayed; everything can hurt him, including words and the very suspicion of words. . . . The Mexican is always remote, from the world and from other people. And also from himself.²⁶

One of the central thesis of Paz's *The Labyrinth of Solitude* is that the reaction to such a belief in the Mexican is that of closing himself to others and to self. The Mexican is "hermetic." This is especially so for the macho.

The Mexican *macho*--the male--is a hermetic being, closed up in himself, capable of guarding both himself and whatever has been confided to him. Manliness is judged according to one's invulnerability to enemy arms or the impacts of the outside world. Stoicism is the most exalted of our military and political attributes. Our history is full of expressions and incidents that demonstrate the indifference of our heroes toward suffering or danger.²⁷

To the macho, the most threatening person in his solitude is the woman because in a real way she contains life, which he longs for, and death, which he dreads.

²⁶Octavio Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude* (New York: Grove Press, 1961), 29.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 31.

Woman is another being who lives apart and is therefore an enigmatic figure. It would be better to say that she is the Enigma. She attracts and repels like men of an alien race or nationality. She is an image of both fecundity and death. In almost every culture the goddesses of creation are also goddesses of destruction. Woman is a living symbol of the strangeness of the universe and its radical heterogeneity. As such, does she hide life within herself, or death? What does she think? Or does she think? Does she truly have feelings? Is she the same as we are? Sadism begins as a revenge against feminine hermeticism or as a desperate attempt to obtain a response from a body we fear is insensible.²⁸

Industrialization has been a mixed blessing because on the one hand it has improved the lot of many, but it has added to the sense of estrangement which the Mexican feels. In mechanized Mexico the individual is farther removed from nature, others and self. The modern worker lacks individuality, the class or company is stronger than himself and his personality is dissolved in the mass which the working class is. Creativity becomes stultified, spontaneity obliterated, and once more the macho is alone with nothing but his naked self and meaninglessness.

This condition which industrialization brings along is by no means unique to Mexico, but in view of the lack of integration of the Mexican ego it compounds more than ever a problem that by now seems to be perennial.

The purpose of this chapter was not so much to review the history of Mexico as to present in a historical perspective a situation which one may honestly call epidemic. Machismo is, in conclusion, a unique brand of

aggression influenced by the archetype of the Feminine and intimately tied to the days of human sacrifices and sacred wars, and often expressed in the many struggles of independence and revolution. One thing is certain, violence has failed to strengthen the ego of the Mexican, he continues to be the frightened man wearing a mask of boldness. Violence breeds violence and those who adhere to the theory that revolutions are means of restoring ego strength would be well advised to look into the patterns of violence in Mexico and Latin America.

CHAPTER VI

A CHALLENGE TO THE CHURCH

It is not enough to present a survey which merely brings forth historico-cultural reasons for the hyperaggressive character of the Mexican; it becomes necessary to point out possible solutions and that is what this chapter shall do. It is expected that the steps here formulated become the basis of an undertaking by the Christian Church in Mexico or possibly in Latin America at large. Much of what will be said here goes against the grain of the main thrust of Protestantism in Latin America and may produce more controversy than positive results; however, it is expected that the reality and magnitude of the problem of violence may rally people together.

The problem of violence is complex and therefore one must not expect simple answers nor immediate solutions. Patience will be the main ingredient necessary to correct a situation which has roots firmly imbedded in the soil of history. Although some of the steps towards a solution may be better undertaken by governmental or private institutions, the author sees the church as a catalyzer and an enabler bringing about cooperation between as many agencies

as need be rallied to solve the problem. The task of the church is that of bringing salvation to real men of flesh and bones in whatever their historical situation happens to be, and to solve the problems of violence in Mexico is tantamount to salvation, to making men free and leading them into a more abundant life.

I. EDUCATIONAL PHASE

Octavio Paz once stated that to know ourselves is to know our singularity,¹ and this is a need which the Mexican must meet. Much of what causes the problem of violence stems from a confused identity. The Mexican must become honestly aware of his past, a past not only of colorful heroes but also full of real tragedy. One must abandon the adolescent attitude of believing that the history of his nation has had no flaws.

An honest education would include more about the causes of aggression and would disclose some of the shameful truths about the men and women of the Revolution. Specifically, education must disclose the fact that many of the heroes of the Revolution were men of violence with little or no ideology. One such man was Doroteo Arango,

¹Octavio Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude* (New York: Grove Press, 1961), 10.

the "northern centaur" who was better known as Pancho Villa. Villa was an extremely violent man long before the Revolution started. At the age of sixteen he had already killed a man and the Revolution provided him with an "accepted" way of expressing his hyperaggressiveness. Villa never needed any ideology, he only needed bullets to fight in the Revolution and was the perfect exemplification of the Mexican Macho. Villa killed a man who wanted to take his sister away from the family and yet he turned around and raped and killed women, sisters of other men. These facts need to be known, the mythical heroes of Mexico need to be exposed, and an honest demythologization of the Mexican history needs to be undertaken. This is a task that requires courage because most Mexicans would prefer to retain the heroes which feed their psychopathic egos than to face the cruel reality of the naked self. This task, however, must be undertaken if Mexicans are to leave the cycle of violence.

Women ought to be included more and more in higher education. Traditionally the field of elementary education has been opened to them but many other areas need to be opened to them. The National University of Mexico already has more than doubled the number of women graduates in the disciplines of medicine, law and the arts in the last twenty years but a special effort should be made to

encourage and aid those women who want higher education since the percentage of professional women is still extremely low.

Education needs to be deeply concerned with axiology. The creation of new values rather than the perpetuation of old, outdated, and destructive tenets is imperative. Educational institutions ought to strive towards exposing the majority of Mexicans to the reality and extent of violence today as well as the complexity of the factors that contribute to the graveness of the situation. Parents ought to become aware of the patterns of behavior that tend to perpetuate violence. All vehicles available must be used for education: radio and television spots, newspaper articles, conferences, symposiums, lectures, etc. No educator ought to remain passive in view of a situation which threatens to continue to hurt psychologically and physically a great number of the Mexicans today and in the future.

II. ECONOMIC PHASE

Mexico has experienced a tremendous economic growth in the last decade. As was mentioned earlier, this has been a mixed blessing, since industrialization has tended to accentuate the problem of identity diffusion

which is an integral contributing cause to the problem of violence. However, economic improvement may also help, especially when it is coupled with education and in general with an overall attack of the causes of violence. A better economic portion will help individuals to have a better self-image, that in turn would lower the potential for aggression, since there is a high correlation between aggression as a low self-image.

Women in business are seen as a threat to the masculine ego, and traditionally women have been relegated to the role of stenographers or at the most accountants; this is partially because many women have not had enough education. Business firms ought to consider carefully the possibilities of on-the-job training for women and begin to give more managerial responsibilities to able women. The more women make their presence felt in all possible facets of life, the more openly will men have to face the reality of their presence in the "world of men."

Another way in which economics can help ease the problem of aggression is by making more money available for educational programs specifically aimed at reducing the violence in the Mexican culture. Furthermore, overall economic progress in the nation would create a more respectable national image, one which would lead Mexicans to feel rightfully proud of their country and consequently

of themselves.

One thing needs to be remembered when one talks about economic progress, and that is the question of population control. As can immediately be seen, this is an area where religion, education, and economics overlap. It is not enough to double the Gross National Product to insure the economic growth of a nation, the per capita income also must increase and that is more feasible when the population growth is kept at a minimum. All possible avenues of population control need to be explored and a concentrated effort will be required to bring this about. In a later section dealing specifically with religion, this question will be pursued further; it suffices to state now that this is one of the key areas of concern when one deals with violence. An overcrowded and poor nation is a logical breeding ground for violence, especially when the nation already has accepted cultural patterns that tend to perpetuate and strengthen violent reactions.

III. POLITICAL PHASE

This area is extremely difficult to deal with, especially because of the political patterns which have already been established in Mexico. One must approach those in positions of power with diplomacy, but at the

same time with facts to back up the epidemic proportions of the problem of violence. Mexican political institutions need to become aware of the fact that it is to their self-interest to take all necessary steps to correct the problem, since a perpetuation of the present situation will eventually mean a violent overthrow of the present power structures.

Mexico is a Federated Republic with strong socialistic tendencies, and there are enough means to begin a reversal of the trends of violence. Most people would consider the pursuit of official governmental intervention a blind alley; however, it is imperative to explore all possible means to combat the hyperaggressiveness of the nation.

Legislation should be enacted, and above all, enforced, to insure fair and humane treatment of women. It is not enough to have "granted" them suffrage, it is necessary to protect especially married women in divorce settlements and to hold men more responsible.

Government sponsored programs ought to be initiated, especially designed to expose women to as many facts of the political life of Mexico as possible. The Mexican woman ought to stop trying to achieve dignity only as a wife or mother and must surge to the national scene as an able participant in the total national life.

The government of Mexico ought to be aware that graft and corruption set patterns of violence in movement and that the poor national image is perpetuated when such is the case. Also it is necessary that a unity of national purpose be made explicit and clear. Too often the machinery of government seems to be a multi-headed monster which creeps in all directions without a guide or compass. This is not conducive to respect for the government, love for the nation or for the self, and such a situation would contribute further to individual identity diffusion.

Finally, the Mexican government ought to make the gradual but deliberate eradication of violence an item of top priority. For as long as the *status quo* remains unchallenged, no governmental system, no political or educational institution, no individual is reasonably safe.

IV. PSYCHOLOGICAL PHASE

It should be obvious that no phase may work by itself, that the presentation of each as a separate unit is for descriptive purposes only, and that in reality a concerted effort, with all possible phases working harmoniously, is necessary if success is ever to be achieved.

Psychology and psychiatry in Mexico lag behind the present day trends. Mexican psychology is basically

neo-Freudian and is still concentrating by and large on the more obviously "sick" people. Psychologically unbalanced people still carry the stigma which was associated with a type of mentality more in tune with the trends of the first quarter or at the most the first half of this century than with current views.

Karen Horney and Erich Fromm have been of tremendous influence in the psychological schools of thought in Mexico. Much of the effort of the leading Mexican psychologists has been spent in determining causes of problems rather than in combating those causes. Also the Freudian and neo-Freudian approaches seem to call for a more patient and delayed type of therapy which, effective though it may be, may well be impractical in view of a situation which is so wide spread and so deeply imbedded. A more concentrated effort is required if the situation is to be solved, and psychologists need to pool their resources with educational, religious, economic, and governmental agencies. *Salud Mental*, mental health, needs to be promoted in a rather extensive program. Group therapy, family therapy, and therapy in the schools, factories, churches, and homes are imperative. Most of the programs ought to be aimed more in the direction of strengthening of the ego and personality integration.

The task is almost titanic, yet necessary if the

national syndrome of violence is to be dealt with in a constructive and mature manner.

V. RELIGIOUS PHASE

This part is of special interest to this work, since the main goal of the present enterprise is to suggest specific ways in which religion can contribute to ameliorate the problem of machismo.

As was stated earlier, the author does not accept the religious-secular type of dichotomy that would relegate the church to deal only with the "spiritual" needs of man. Man is a whole, and whatever affects the body affects the soul. Religious institutions in Mexico will fail God and man if they fail to involve themselves in solving a problem which is dehumanizing and destroying thousands of children of God daily. It would be criminal negligence for the Christian church to continue to save "souls" without also rescuing and humanizing people. The church therefore needs to initiate or at least participate in "secular" programs which are aimed at the amelioration of a situation which as has been argued is of epidemic proportions.

Catholicism in Mexico compromised from the very beginning with the native religions. In order to facilitate the process of Christianization, the local gods were

integrated in a not too subtle manner into the totality of a religion which one must consider truly syncretistic. The Christian churches were erected in traditionally sacred places and the native gods were put behind or under the newly erected altars.

Catholicism, furthermore, was seen from the beginning as a religion of violence; it was imposed by force and perpetuated by force. As it was earlier stated, Catholicism brought along a mother and a religion which fostered dependency and escapism. Catholicism needs to undergo a tremendous amount of change if it is going to really solve the problems of Mexico.

Protestantism has had only one hundred years of existence in Mexico; it is a foreign but more passive religion which gained a foothold through persuasion rather than through imposition. It was originally seen as an arm of the "Yankee Imperialism" and consequently its followers were seen as traitors and persecuted as heretics.

Protestants had to resort to pacifism as a way of life, but their pacifism in action was countered by an aggressive ideology which was essentially designed to attack the Catholic ideology. Much of the "theological" discussions of Protestantism are aimed at discrediting Roman Catholic beliefs and practices. After Pope John XXIII and Vatican II the Catholic-Protestant tension has

eased a bit, but Protestant suspicion still remains high.

Since the Protestant style has been a polemic one, Mexican Protestants have not concerned themselves too much with attacking the social ills of the nation. The theology of the church at large remains conservative and fundamentalist; this makes the Protestant Church just as ill equipped to deal with the problem of violence as the Roman Catholic Church is. Radical but necessary changes need to be made by both of these churches before they can become effective catalyzers and leaders in the movement against violence.

Changes needed in the Roman Catholic Church. One fundamental change is that of openness to each other's tradition. Catholics have taken a first step after Vatican II but the Protestants remain cautious and suspicious. This is understandable in view of the persecution of Protestants by the Catholics, persecution which only ceased about five years ago.

Roman Catholics need to make a change that is extremely important, that is, they need to de-emphasize the worship of the Virgin Mary since, as it is here argued, the worship of women in the abstract allows for the women of flesh and bones to remain ill treated and dehumanized. To ask for such a move seems almost impossible except that

there are some signs in the horizon which make the light of hope shine brighter.

One such sign comes from the discussions of the Second Vatican Council. Originally the question of the Virgin Mary was going to be dealt with in a completely separate document; however, after a long and heated discussion and very narrow vote, the Fathers of the church decided to append the discussion to the whole document on the Constitution of the Church.

The aforementioned sign may seem insignificant but is indeed a great step in the right direction especially when one reads the content and analyzes the language of the discussion.

The entire text represents a skillful and prudent compromise between two tendencies in modern Catholic theology, one of which would emphasize Mary's unique connection with Christ the Redeemer; the other, her close connection with the Church and all the redeemed.²

With the exception of some specific quotations from older and more traditional documents and the rather infrequent use of the term "Mother of God" there is little else that a Protestant would violently disagree with in the whole discussion. And one must conclude that the whole discussion and its being appended to the whole document of

²Walter M. Abbott (ed.), *The Documents of Vatican II* (New York: America Press, 1966), 85.

the church is indicative of a de-emphasis (or indeed a demotion) of the role of Mary in the life and theology of the Church.

Another sign comes from recent discussions of the author of this work with practicing Roman Catholics in Mexico. In the course of these discussions it was clarified that the story of the Virgin of Guadalupe and its miraculous "painting"³ is a question which is very much open to discussion since no Pope or Council has ever declared that the question of the Virgin of Guadalupe is to be treated as dogma.

One must not get his hopes too high however, since the Virgin of Guadalupe, although not a dogma, is too close to the hearts and dynamics of the majority of Mexicans. But a gradual de-emphasis is certainly within the realm of the possible and ought to be one of the frontiers of exploration and dialogue.

A further hopeful sign is the presence and influence of Bishop Sergio Lopez Arceu and of Monsignor Ivan Illich in Cuernavaca. The presence of these two titans in Cuernavaca has made the little city the center of the new Catholic left and the most hopeful Mecca of progressive Catholicism.

³ *vide supra*, 75-76.

Lopez Arceu, the most "protestant" of bishops is credited with "cleaning" the Cathedral of Cuernavaca; he stripped the church of the many images that it once had. Don Sergio, as he is known to his friends and associates is an indigenist of first class. The "mariachi mass" a truly Mexican contribution to church liturgy was developed thanks to his encouragement and sanction.

Illich, the subject of a recent *Saturday Review* article is one of the most dynamic figures of the Roman Catholic Church. Through the influential Center for Intercultural Documentation he is able to plant the seeds of change and modernization which may eventually make the Roman Catholic church one of the most dynamic forces shaping the future of Latin America. One must not be naively optimistic, the hierarchy still wishes to retain the status quo and Bishop Lopez Arceu and Monsignor Illich are still unwelcome, if influential, mavericks.

Another area where change is imperative, if the Roman Catholic Church is to be effective, is in its stance on birth control. It was stated earlier that economic growth is intimately tied with population control and since the great majority of Mexicans are Catholics, at least in name, it is of great importance that the Church sanction and in fact encourage birth control.

Changes needed in the Protestant Stance. First of all, the polemic quality of Protestant theology must be abandoned. The Kingdom of God is not going to come by engaging in theological discussions trying to prove the superiority of Protestantism over Catholicism. This is a hard task, since much of the vitality of Protestantism was due to the anti-Catholic stance which has been so appealing to first generation Protestants.

Secondly, the Protestant Church must move in the direction of relating the eternal verities of the Gospel to the actual happenings of every day. Protestantism has been ghettoistic and other-worldly, fostering therefore a lack of vital concern with the improvement of the social and economic conditions of people. The salvation of souls has led to a style that has lacked vitality in the social action front.

It must be stated with fairness that valiant attempts have been made through schools and social centers to meet the social needs but the effort, laudable though it is, is minuscule, especially in view of the graveness and magnitude of the problems faced. The most threatening change that needs to be initiated and pursued is that of abandoning the uninformed biblicism that prevails in Mexico and which in many instances fosters a patriarchal attitude

on the part of men.

Demythologization is a term that sounds sacrilegious in most Protestant circles in Mexico, but that is what is needed. One story that requires such an approach is the Adam and Eve story. The story by itself and outside of Mexico would be relatively harmless; however, in the patriarchal atmosphere and culture of Mexico, it is most damaging when accepted as literally true. If Adam was the first to be created and Eve came from his rib, it follows, in the Mexican logic, that man is the most important of the two. Furthermore, as the story of the Fall comes around one sees that it was the women who first sinned and then persuaded the man to transgress. It follows that women are responsible for all evil and sin. A situation which is cultural is therefore universalized. Indeed it becomes a cosmic truth that women are not to be trusted and need to be continuously watched.

Another story that requires demythologization is that of the Virgin Birth of Christ. The story stands, of course, in the background of the worship of the Virgin Mary, and the special place which Mary holds even for Protestants banks pretty much on the legendary elements of the story of the miraculous birth of Jesus.

It is of great importance that Mexicans recognize the story for what it is, a product of the faith in Jesus

as the Christ, and not a historical infallible truth; one must convey clearly that the faith in Christ produced the story rather than that the story produced the faith. All this is extremely threatening for the Mexican Protestants, but it is a task that needs to be undertaken.

Another area that requires careful study and interpretation is that of some of the pronouncements of Paul in his letters. "Man is the glory of God and woman is the glory of man," taken out of context and interpreted by the superioristic patriarchal Mexican mentality spells trouble for women. Such a statement justifies the superiority of man and the subservient role of women, a condition which, as argued here, is unhealthy, dehumanizing and furthermore promotes violence.

In all fairness to Mexican Protestantism, it must be stated that by far women enjoy a better position among Protestants than among Catholics. The Women's Society of Christian Service, the Protestant hospitals, the board of deaconesses, and the educational programs of the church have given woman an opportunity to express herself in ways which are not normally open for Roman Catholics in Mexico. Also the Methodist executive secretary of Social Concerns is an able nurse, Maria Elena Reyes, who is also a very positive Feminine model.

Finally but more importantly, the Mexican Christian

Church needs to develop a theology of involvement which may be able to steer people in the direction of active concern for all the men and women caught in the web of violence. Such a theology needs to be one which takes a strongly non-violent stance, indeed a theology of non-violence.

CHAPTER VII

TOWARDS A NON-VIOLENT THEOLOGICAL OPTION

Latin American churchmen today stand in the need of a theology of involvement. Most of the traditional movements, as stated before, have been isolationist and ghettoistic while the "new left" is extremely militant and revolutionary. Somewhere in between these two extreme options one must search for a theology of involvement and change which, in view of the violent character of the Mexican as well as because of the essentially pacifist character of Christianity, needs to be a non-violent type of theology. The search for such a stance is the purpose of this final chapter.

I. THE CURRENT ALTERNATIVES

In Mexico, and in general in Latin America, there is too much polarization in the current theological scene. On the one hand one finds the conservative fundamentalists, championed mainly by American missionaries, like Peter Wagner from Fullerton, who advocate more of a "personal salvation," and the so called "new left" exemplified by

Emilio Castro, the *Iglesia y Sociedad en America Latina* (Church and Society in Latin America), Ruben Albes and others who advocate a "theology of hope" which is strictly revolutionary.

Fundamentalists, although concerned with a token involvement preach a Gospel which is basically "other worldly." They foster an extreme biblicism which preys on the dependency feelings of many Mexicans who merely trade one type of authoritarianism for another, a Pope for a paper pope--the Bible. Conservative theologies emphasize the salvation of souls, the making of new converts, baptism of more disciples, and fulfillment of the great commission.

Fundamentalism must be criticized for its "docetic" view of man and for its lack of involvement in the burning social issues of the day in Mexico. Fundamentalism however, is the dominant type of theology in Mexico and needs to be dealt with carefully but firmly. The genuine and laudable concern with individual salvation needs to be mingled with just as genuine a desire to change social conditions which jeopardize the fulfillment, or even the possibility of the acceptance, of such a personal salvation.

The *modernistas* from the new left are by and large men who have received their education in either Argentina's progressive *Facultad de Teologia*, or *Rio Piedras*

in Costa Rica, or in one of the more progressive seminaries in the United States. At this time they are in the minority which has many hearers, the majority of whom are either marginal Christians or totally unchurched.

In general, the theologies of hope from the left are revolutionary and tend to baptize violent movements supposedly intended to bring radical changes in the social structures of Latin American countries. Violence is openly advocated as God's way to bring about the Kingdom.

God is with Regis Debray [a theologian of Revolution] . . . violent revolution is creative, pacifist evolution is impractical. . . . In some writings social revolution is seen as the revolution of the church also.¹

Marxist type revolutions, which in Latin America and in Mexico are understood as essentially violent, are advocated as catalytic agents of the movement toward humanization. Such advocacy is made by men like Ruben Albes who is a sharp critic of the social structures and of the people in positions of power in Latin America. His criticism is well taken and his impatience is understandable; unfortunately, his advocacy of Marxism may be creating more problems for the people in Mexico, where violence has already proven to be an essentially de-humanizing force.

One must agree with Albes when he states that the

¹Pedro Wagner, *Teologia Latino-Americana* (Miami: Editorial Vida, 1969), 44.

Christian community should never be identified with the status quo, but to jump from such a premise and then argue for "revolution in the most radical sense"² is extremely dangerous and it also ignores other open possibilities for Christians who do not wish to side with the status quo but who reject violence as a medium of change.

Albes is not alone in his call for radical revolution; Gonzalo Castillo Cardenas, one of the most respected spokesmen of the new left, stated in a position paper read to the World Conference on Church and Society in Geneva in 1966 that:

. . . the most important thing for the Christian is love for the neighbor . . . if this love is to be genuine it must strive for effectiveness; if our charity does not solve the problem of underdevelopment, then, we must find more efficient ways of doing it . . . it is therefore necessary to take the power away from the privileged minorities and give it to the poor masses. This revolution may be peaceful *if the minorities do not resist violently* [italics not in original] therefore, the revolution is not only allowable but mandatory for those believers who see it as the only effective way of fulfilling his love for the neighbor.³

One must not question the sincerity of those who advocate revolution as an effective way of fulfilling the commandment of love, on the other hand one must resist the

²Ruben Albes, "Injusticia y Rebelion," *Cristianismo y Sociedad*, II:6 (June 1964), 48.

³Gonzalo Castillo Cardenas, "Christians and the Struggle for a New Social Order in Latin America," (address to World Conference on Church and Society, Geneva, 1966), 5-6. (Mimeographed.)

temptation to baptize any "humanizing revolution" as the action of God in the world. The history of Mexico and of Latin America abounds in examples of revolutions. In many instances the ideology preceded the violence, in others the opposite occurred, in still others the ideology was never there. It is dangerously naive to believe that somehow one would be given a special power to recognize which of the many revolutions always going on is indeed humanizing. It is difficult to imagine that anyone could be optimistic as to believe that a revolution to end all revolutions is possible and that even if possible that such revolution would end up being humanizing in its final effect.

Despite the glamour and the ideologies of revolution, violence remains as the most de-humanizing force (at least for Mexico it has proven to be so) and after many revolutions the lot of the masses remains basically unchanged. Violence has failed to restore peace or to modify social systems. It has been basically only a way of removing one oppressing minority and replacing it with another.

It is of great importance to recognize the fact that Jesus did stand for change and that he preached a love which he always translated into deeds which were change oriented. Also, in a real sense Jesus was a revolutionary figure, but that does not justify the desire to baptize

revolutions as Christian or even as pen-ultimate and catalytic. One more thing that needs to be kept in mind is that a theology does not need to be "revolutionary" to bring about change and that in Mexico in particular and in Latin America in general a non-violent option needs to be exercised.

Non-violence is seen by many as a move which aligns the pacifists with the oppressors,⁴ but this need not be accepted as true. One can be completely opposed to the status quo and totally committed to change without resorting to violence. Non-violence needs to be tried as an ideology, as the basis for a theology, and also as a methodology for change.

II. A NON-VIOLENT OPTION

The purpose of this work has been to show the violent character and life of the Mexican and to point to possible avenues of change. Obviously a theology based on the findings and recommendations of this paper needs to be both a theology of change and also a theology of non-violence. Such a theology is in sympathy with the new left, but only in its dissatisfaction with the status

⁴Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1968), 25.

quo and in its invitation to involvement in change, not with the methods of revolution which it advocates. The Christian must be an agent of change, but his technique and his motivation must distinguish him from other agents of change.

A living option for Mexico needs to emphasize the personal element of salvation, but not in the spiritual sense alone. Rather, the idea of salvation as wholeness and as the coming to grips with one's self, in a religious, physical, and psychological sense.

The inclusion of the elements of involvement in change in society and in personal change in individuals should not be interpreted as a desire for compromise but rather as a sincere and objective inclusion of those valid elements in the theologies of conservatism and the new left. Conservatives and the new left have both been guilty of transplanting theologies to Latin America without taking into account very seriously the currents of thought and patterns of behavior which are prevalent there. To follow in their path and introduce a non-violent theology which is only a transplant from the Civil Rights movement would be foolish and irresponsible. What is here intended is not a transplant, but rather an adaptation of theology which is based essentially on the teachings of Christ and takes into account the character of the men and women who stand

in need of such an option.

III. ELEMENTS OF A MEXICAN THEOLOGY OF CHANGE

A Christian theology of change in Mexico must address itself to those specific needs of the men and women in Mexico; it must answer the problems of dependency, identity, man-woman tension, and fear of death. In general it must try to direct the efforts of Mexicans in the way of non-violent change. A Mexican theology must present an option which does not feed the need for dependency which exists in such an exaggerated manner in the Mexican. Such a theology will direct the churches to purge the element of dependency in their ritual, symbols, and practices.

God. It will be very difficult to preserve the symbol of God as the father primarily because his "masculinity" fosters a sense of superiority on the part of men. A second difficulty with the symbol father is that it has so many negative connotations in the minds of people who are used to an almost non-existent father who comes home drunk and beats the mother and children and is in general irresponsible. The third objection to the symbol father is that if it were to be viewed in a positive way it would denote a protective type of care which would foster the

sense of dependency which is so much at the core of the problem of violence and aggression.

Francisco Gonzalez Pineda states that:

. . . in the Mexicans one notices an extraordinary need to be fed, of receiving from all, of depending . . . Aggression is a manifestation of an excessive desire to obtain because there is an inability to obtain satisfaction.⁵

What is needed is to emphasize that God exemplifies those elements which are more positive and admired in both man and woman. This suggestion must not be interpreted as a nostalgia for a hierogamic (hermaphroditic) type of deity, it is not a combination of genders or sexes that is here proposed, but rather, an inclusion of those virtues which are usually associated with the best of masculinity and femininity. In a sense the Aztec religion seemed to be moving in that direction about the time of the arrival of the Spanish because the god Quetzacoatl combined in the symbol of the feathered serpent the best elements of maleness and femininity.

The elements of tenderness and creativity are usually associated with the positive side of women and restrained power and generativity are positive assets of men. Without doing violence to the Christian ideal one may emphasize these elements in God without having to resort

⁵ Francisco Gonzalez Pineda, *El Mexicano* (Mexico: Asociacion Psicoanalitica Mexicana, 1961), 252.

to the symbols of father or mother. The author of the letter of John included an element of de-symbolization and de-sexualization of God when he states that God is love. The same is true of Paul who in several passages refers to God not in terms of personhood but in terms of attribute. The move towards an emphasis on God's attributes rather than on his or her sex is not necessarily new nor is it anti-Christian. Many of the fathers and theologians of the Church used philosophical categories to speak of God and in more recent times this continues to be done. Tillich calls God the ground of being; Pierre Teilhard de Chardin sees God as Omega and John Cobb has spoken of God in the most literal way as:

. . . actual, a subject of experience, an entertainer of purposes, a maker of decisions, subject to the influences from the past and himself influencing the future. . . . In terms of space . . . God is omnispatial . . . God is immediately related to every subject.

In terms of time . . . God has [had no such] beginning point . . . [and] the divine life will continue without violent interruption [death]. In terms of knowledge . . . the divine experience is ideally related to all reality without distortion and limitation. God knows what is actual as actual and what is possible as possible.

In terms of concern . . . the divine experience has perfect sympathy with all other experiences and seeks their richest fulfillment in no tension with its self-concern.⁶

⁶John B. Cobb Jr., "Affirming God in a Non-Theistic Age," (lecture delivered upon installation as Ingraham Memorial Professor of Theology, Claremont, California, September, 1964.)

There is absolutely no reference to elements which would foster dependency and, just as important for Mexican theology, all of the characteristics mentioned in the first part are characteristics which *all* human beings, *men and women* have in common with God. All men and women are actual, subjects of experience, entertainers of purposes, decision makers, are subject to the influences from the past and in turn influence the future.

The God of this "Christian natural theology" is certainly a living option for Mexican Christianity and all efforts should be made to translate and introduce Cobb's theological categories to the Latin American theological scene.

There are still other reasons that make the theistic God of process theology a genuine alternative. As was seen earlier Mexican Christianity has clung to concepts which foster feelings of dependency. In a later work, Cobb has referred to God as "The One Who Calls." Viewed as such God is far from fostering dependency, rather, it is a challenging God, onw who makes an ultimate claim on man's total commitment calling him to action.

Cobb goes on to say that "God is understood as meeting man in the present in terms of the future calling

him to embody a new and demanding possibility."⁷

Such a concept of God would move the churchmen of Mexico to abandon their ghettoistic cloistered existence and to involve themselves in bringing about change without necessarily going to the extreme of violent overthrows or revolutions.

God also calls man to move beyond self to the more inclusive life that is possible liberating him from the past as well as from selfish conduct in order that he may be able to really give more of himself to the benefit and welfare of others. This element of freedom from the past and from selfishness is, as may seem obvious, a very positive feature for a Mexican theology of change since, as was seen, much of the problem of violence in Mexico stems from extreme selfishness as well as from influences from the past.

A new identity. It has been stated that in the case of the Mexican another factor which contributes to his hypertrophy of aggression is the negative identity which he has. He tends to project his negative identity upon every other man and woman and sees them all as enemies, enemies with whom he must deal violently. Also

⁷John B. Cobb, Jr., *God and the World* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969), 64.

the Mexican sees himself as a man alone in the midst of strangers and caught in a "labyrinth of solitude." A theology of hope and non-violence must present Mexicans with an attainable more inclusive positive identity.

The task of giving men a new identity is at the core of a truly religious enterprise. Such a new and positive identity must first of all be based on realistic images rather than on exaggerated mythologies. The world has already known the horrible and horrifying consequences of a negative identity which attempts to become positive on the basis of some unrealistic and exaggerated myth whether it is called the "Aryan race," or the children of Amaterasu, or an exaggerated version of Black Power, or Manifest Destiny.

The world has also known that in the wake of religious movements of great impact negative identities have been presented with the possibility of being transformed into wider, positive, more inclusive identities. Part of the impetus of the post-exilic prophetic movement in Israel was devoted precisely to the building of a more realistic and more inclusive identity for the children of Israel. Faced with the gap between the myth of the "chosen people" and the reality of the defeat, death, and exile of such chosen ones, the prophets, especially Deutero-Isaiah, were forced to reinterpret Israel's position and come out

with a positive, more inclusive identity, that of Israel as the Lord's servant, the suffering servant *to the nations*.

. . . the Lord said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified." But I said, "I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity . . . " And now the Lord says: "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth." Isaiah 49:3b-4a, 5a, 6.

Out of Isaiah's concept of Israel as a suffering servant to the nations the Christians were able to see that Jesus too had been a suffering servant to the nations. Jesus also moved people from negative identities to a more inclusive new creation. To the slaves of the Roman Empire he offered the title of Children of God and participation in the more inclusive Kingdom of God.

Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, also states in the same vein and quoting Hellenistic wisdom sayings that "we are indeed his [God's] offspring" and that:

. . . in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith, for as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:26-28.

Erik Erikson noted that Ghandi did precisely offer a more inclusive new identity. Ghandi gave to the "untouchables" the new title of *harijan*, children of God, and then led them in the pacifist movement of independence

from England.⁸

There are then in the roots and heritage of the Christian faith and practice enough elements for the formulation of a new and wider identity for the Mexicans. Mexican Christianity must emphasize the reality of the new creation in Christ in whom all are children of the same God and there is "neither male nor female; for you are one in Christ Jesus."

Man-Woman: Opposing or Complementary? For Mexicans the new identity needs to include the mutual identification of all elements but especially of the man-woman polarity. Man and woman in Mexico (indeed all over the world!) need to come to the realization that they are complementary elements of a well integrated personality. The penis envy which Freud observed and the vaginal envy that others have attested need to be resolved into the oneness of mutually inclusive complementary elements. Forcefulness does not need to exclude tenderness, and love is not only a feminine attribute. In Jungian terms, the positive elements of femininity and masculinity, anima and animus need to coexist in *whole* men and women.

Erikson notes that in many "homo-religiosus" like Luther and Ghandi, the acceptance and integration of the

⁸Erik Erikson, *Ghandi's Truth* (New York: Norton, 1969), 435.

element of femininity in their personality enabled them to be better integrated and thereby better equipped to become true religious leaders. One finds several instances when Luther refers to states of mind in his own being in terms of "normally" feminine moods, i.e. *qua mulier in conceptu*, like a woman in labor. Ghandi also is fond not only of thinking along the lines of a sublimated maternalism but also of acting along those lines; i.e. he did not object to being referred to as a "mother-in-law" or to weave and knit, as women "only" do.⁹

The mutual identification of man and woman can not occur as long as violence is viewed as an acceptable masculine mode of behavior. The Mexican churches, therefore, have the responsibility of actively devaluating models of violence. Machismo must be condemned as an adolescent attitude which is damaging for the actor and the recipient of such behavior.

"A relative devaluation of the martial model of masculinity may well lead to a freer identification of the two sexes."¹⁰

The need for confession. Confession, religiously

⁹*Ibid.*, 402.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 403.

involved in the creation of the future.

Acceptance of death. There is no doubt that the Mexican "accepts" death, but he does so in a fatalistic sort of a way that, in fact, constitutes for all practical purposes non-acceptance of the reality of death. It is in this area that Christianity is extremely well equipped to provide the Mexican people with a vision of eternal life that swallows up the power of death. In order for non-violence to be accepted as a life style or as a technique for change it is of extreme importance that suffering and death be truly accepted and transcended. It was stated earlier that violence is one of the expressions of man's rebellion against the fate of death. The Mexican Macho acts bravely and toys with death because he wants to determine when he is going to die and also how. A popular Mexican saying states, "if I'm going to be killed tomorrow it might as well be right now." This pseudo transcendence of death is merely a mask and yet it contains elements for a positive approach to death. Man needs to have a say about his death; he cannot have much of a say as to whether or not to die. In being able to state at least when or how death is to come he feels a measure of self-determination. This kind of thinking is at the basis of much heroism in battle and also in the background of

many suicides.

There is, however, still another way of participating in the determination of death and that is, man may decide *what to die for*. In the positive sense this is the key to salvation and resurrection. Resurrection is not only the vision of a victory over the grave, it is also the ability to determine what to die for. Jesus' victory over death was founded on his willingness to die for what he believed to be God's will.

The same element of transcendence over death is at the basis of non-violence as a method for change. Ghandi convinced himself and his followers of the need to accept suffering and death as instruments of change.¹¹ Such acceptance for the Christian and the pacifist constitutes true victory over death since it is *an active choice without submission!*

This ability to transcend death coupled with the Christian's faith in the vision of eternal life equips men to begin living a more abundant life. The determination of a cause to die for is tantamount to the choice of a cause to live for and the source of strength to bear the consequences.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 411

Love, the all embracing element. All of the aforementioned elements in a theology of change need to have the ingredients of Christian love as the all embracing power which holds everything in perspective and gives direction and vitality.

The Christian idea of love, agape or caritas, is a love which includes the tenderness of the feminine and the strength of the masculine and is therefore all inclusive. It contains acceptance of men and women as they are but it is an acceptance which soon becomes translated into a radical demand.

In his *Structures of Christian Existence*, John Cobb states that Jesus viewed the whole radical demand of God on men in the context of his love. Such love is at the same time necessary and yet unattainable by man's own efforts.

Only if man finds that he is already accepted in his sin and sickness, can he accept his own self-preoccupation as it is; and only then can his psychic economy be opened toward others, to accept them as they are--not in order to save himself, but because he doesn't need to save himself. We love only because we are first loved. In this way, and only in this way, can the spiritual man genuinely and purely love.¹²

¹²John B. Cobb, Jr., *The Structure of Christian Existence* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), 135.

This type of love then liberates the Christian to love others and it is the element which needs to be emphasized the most in the current theological scene in Mexico and Latin America. Both sides of love need to be presented since otherwise one would be making the mistake which the two theological positions now in vogue there are making. The fundamentalist is presenting a love which is available to the individual for his salvation but which ignores the radical demand from God. The radical left emphasizes the demand at the expense of the personal experience of God's transforming love.

The most difficult, and yet most essential, part of Christian love is that of loving one's enemies, or those who are most different from the one who loves. Without this other phase of Christian love the first two elements, the knowledge of being loved and the loving of others, would be rendered meaningless. When Jesus asked men to love their enemies he was giving them the key to what can be called a "double conversion." Learning to love the adversary as human, intrinsically, will confront the hater, the enemy with an enveloping technique which will permit him to regain his latent capacity to trust and to love in return.¹³

¹³Erikson, *op. cit.*, 416.

How important and necessary is this element in man-woman relations in Mexico! These "natural enemies" need to know that God loves both of them in their condition and in turn he asks them to love each other in order to release in them the natural capacity to trust and love which they have latent in them.

IV. CONCLUSION

The task is far from finished!! What has been pointed out is the violent character of the Mexican and in view of such condition the need for a non-violent theology of change. The elements of such theology have been outlined relying heavily on the theology of process as a genuine option between the extremes of revolutionary involvement and religious isolationism. A sober and creative dissatisfaction with the present conditions coupled with a genuine Christian love shall guide the implementation of the elements of the theological option mentioned here.

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